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Name of the Book: ESSAYS AND SKETCHES published by M/s Longmans Green & Co. Ltd., London, our associated company.

Name of the author in full with address. Edited by A.J. Merson
c/o Longmans Green & Co. Ltd., London.

Name of the Publisher and his registered name in the University. M/s Drient Longmans Ltd., Nicol Road, Ballard Estate, Bombay 1. Reg. No. 38

Name of the Subject: English

Name of the class for which intended. Intermediate Examination.

Purpose (whether submitted as a text-book or Supp. Reading or for library. Text-Book

Price: 3s. 6d. or Rs. 2-13-6

Number of Pages: 192

Whether the book was submitted before and if so, when? Not submitted in recent years.

Date: 12 9th April 1953

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SECTION A NO. 29

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POETRY

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HERITAGE HAST ON THY WEYE."

—JOHN LYDGATE.

ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

EDITED BY

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Illustrated by
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LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
LONDON - NEW YORK - TORONTO

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. LTD.
6 & 7 CLIFFORD STREET, LONDON W.1
NICOL ROAD, BOMBAY 1
17 CHITTARANJAN AVENUE, CALCUTTA 13
36A MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS 2
LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. INC.
55 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 3
LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
215 VICTORIA STREET, TORONTO 1

New Impression 1948

Printed in the Netherlands by
N.V. Drukkerij v.h. L. E. Bosch & Zoon
Utrecht

FOREWORD

THE title of this volume, *Essays and Sketches*, is not new, but the editor makes no apology for that since it is a suitable description of the material that has been chosen and promises a selection that is varied as regards

learned circle of readers, and, though often very brief, are too concise in expression and too difficult of vocabulary to be understood without considerable study. Joseph Addison and Sir Richard Steele were the real pioneers of the English Essay as we know it, writing as they did for the ordinarily well-educated public of the time and writing on topics that were of general interest. Occasionally, as in the essays on "Superstitions" and "Frozen Voices," they poked gentle fun at social foibles and often they delighted in description of character as in the famous series of essays written round Sir Roger de Coverley. But with their readers always in mind, they employed a lucid English style, with no extravagances of words or expressions, that served as a model for subsequent essayists and determined the future development of the Essay. Indeed, what changes their successors have introduced have scarcely altered the form of the Essay. They have made it more topical and therefore more interesting to an ever widening circle of

readers; they have overcome the slight stiffness that is a result of Addison's precise diction; they frequently describe personal experiences and personal impressions with a frankness that the reserved Addison would have found impossible; they often assume the confidential and friendly manner of a good conversationalist to whom we delight to listen; but their essays are nevertheless the natural and inevitable outcome of the Addisonian tradition.

The "Sketches" that make up the greater part of the volume, though complete in themselves, are of course excerpts from longer works, but they show the same vividness of description as the Essay, they strike the same intimate and friendly note as between writer and reader, and therefore justify their choice as suitable companions for the Essay in a volume which, it is hoped, will prove a useful introduction to the study of that important literary form.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For permission to use copyright material I am indebted to the following:

Mr. Mortimer Batten for "The Thieves" from *The Omnibus Book of Animal Stories* edited by Robertson Scott and published by



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ASTON VILLA v. ARSENAL

ALTHOUGH they were early there was already a jam at the turnstiles leading into the ground, but presently they found themselves comfortably seated in a stand that gave a perfect view of the playing pitch and the great crowd assembling in mounting tiers around it. The field was invitingly dry and spruce, a little worn in patches that were witness to earlier battles of the season, the crisp white lines of its geometric pattern marked with mathematical precision and literally fresh as new paint, the goal-posts, gleaming white also, solid but beautifully proportioned with their streamline nets

waiting with an almost animate expectancy for the decisive moments of the game, and the corner flags ruffling in the light winter breeze. In the centre circle a brass band was playing popular tunes with massive determination, conducted by a band-master who clearly was thanking heaven that he was not as other men were.

Slowly the crowd, shifting like quicksand as it absorbed the steady flow of new-comers from a score of inlets, quietened into settled preparations as the playing hour approached, until the only vacant places seemed to be in the box opposite them, which Robinson told them was reserved for club officials and favoured guests. He said that there were more than fifty thousand people on the ground. All round the field was a constant twinkling of lighted matches, and wisps of tobacco smoke floated everywhere over the spectators. Above the music the buzz of conversation was punctuated by the screech of police rattles and shrill cries from excited partisans, some of them fantastically dressed in the colours of their fancy. The club box filled up as the band marched off the field in a climax of martial ardour, its leader implying by his bearing that if people only had the sense to know it the best of the show was now over. A few moments later there was an explosive roar of London cheering as the Arsenal team, wearing white shorts and red shirts with white sleeves, ran at parade on to the ground, and settled down to a gentle bombardment of their goal-keeper at one end of the field. No sooner had they started this than Birmingham answered London with an even mightier roar as the Villa men came out, wearing white shorts and the

famous claret and blue jerseys that are classic colours in the history of the game. At the other goal they too tried their paces.

Already Jane was fascinated by the athletic mastery of movement in the players warming up to the contest in front of them. As light on their feet as ballet dancers and yet powerful as stripling oak, they tapped the ball from one to another with easy accuracy until someone drove it with incredible force wide of the goal-keeper into the net. If driven directly at him, the pace was moderated to save him for the real work later on. The keepers, to distinguish them in their privilege of handling the ball, wore woollen sweaters and incongruous-looking cloth caps. When not trying their marksmanship, players at both ends of the field were loosening their limbs, high-stepping in rapid little circles, shadow-skipping, feinting in their stride against imaginary opponents. The crowd watched, their impatience momentarily subdued, almost hushed, but pent up for release in full measure when the time came. It was a crowd quite sure of enjoying itself.

The referee, also dressed in football clothes but with a blazer, was now in the middle of the ground, placing a bright new ball on the centre spot. The rival captains joined him, and having shaken hands with him and with each other, one of them spun a coin. Looking at the result as it lay on the ground, he pointed to the other end of the field, the teams changed over and lined up, the whistle blew, and to an accompanying rumble of excitement the game had begun.

It opened sensationally. The Arsenal centre-forward gave the ball from the kick-off to his inside-left, who

without hesitating passed it far across to the right wing. The outside man took it on the run, flicked it to his inside partner, and in a moment it was at the feet of the outside-left. He beat the opposing full-back, took the ball to the corner flag, made a superb centre which the leader took on the half-volley, and in thirty seconds Arsenal had scored without a Villa man having touched the ball. The defeated goal-keeper fetched it out of the net in an attitude of deep dejection, while the entire Arsenal team overwhelmed the scorer in a frenzy of congratulation.

In the crowd pandemonium broke loose. Ten thousand Londoners who had travelled with their favourites flung their arms to heaven and screamed in an ecstasy of thanksgiving. Forty thousand Midlanders groaned miserably under the shock that had fallen on them without any warning. In the meantime the referee was waiting with the ball on the centre spot, and, before the discord and lamentation and delight had begun to subside, the whistle went and the game was off again.

The home team, stoutly refusing to be demoralized by this indecently early reverse, gathered itself together, and as they settled down to even exchanges with their opponents the Midland crowd took heart and the Londoners began to grow apprehensive. A goal lead was a delirious start, but it was by no means an abiding security. After ten minutes the Arsenal men were loudly and repeatedly implored to make it two, but with no effect. Gradually the Villa took their share and a little more of the attack, and when at half-time no other goal had been scored it was still anybody's game.

During the interval the band marched round the field

defiantly playing "Keep the Home Fires Burning", greeted all along the line by Midland cheers that drowned the weaker forces of London derision. The band-master, looking neither to the right nor the left, walked with a confident and jaunty beat which seemed to say that if the home fort fell it would be no fault of his. On a large board that overlooked the ground figures and letters were being put up that by reference to a key in the programme showed the half-time scores in matches being played elsewhere. Jane, without even knowing the names of the teams, found this information unreasonably interesting, and plied Robinson with questions. He appeared to know everything that had ever happened in a football match. Adam, to whom the spectacle of professional soccer at its best had been a revelation, had become a strong Arsenal supporter on the strength of it, and was anxious for the fortunes of what he already regarded as his team. Robinson was not sympathetic. He had a long-standing preference for the Villa.

The second half began, and it was soon clear that Arsenal were going to be hard put to it to hold on to their lead. To do them justice, they did not fall into the error of concentrating on defence. Their forwards made raiding movements at the smallest opportunity, but the Villa pressure more and more confined them to the neighbourhood of their own goal. Time after time their backs relieved desperate situations, and time after time the claret and blue returned to the attack. The incitement to more and yet more effort from the Midland thousands became feverish as the forty-five minutes wore down to twenty, and the twenty to ten. Adam had

his watch in his hand, counting the seconds, and beseeching providence not to let Villa score a goal. Robinson was shouting with the agonizing majority. Five minutes—three—Adam began to feel rather sick, which was absurd. His uncle was yelling "Go it, Villa!" which was maddening, and he yelled back. "Stick it, Arsenal!" Jane too began to feel that she had had about as much as she could stand. Two minutes—Adam certainly was going to be sick—a minute and a—Lord, what was happening? An Arsenal back, beset by three home forwards, cleared weakly, ballooning the ball twenty yards up the field where it was received by the Villa centre-half, momentarily unmarked. Trapping it with his foot before the bounce, he glanced at the goal nearly thirty yards away, and seeing one clear penetrable yard of space, let out a terrific right-footer. The aim was perfect. The Arsenal goal-keeper sprang to meet the danger, and as he did so one of his backs plunged at the ball, misjudged it, and in doing so unsighted the keeper who saw it pass like a streak over his arm into the net.

A crash of human thunder smote the air. Arms, umbrellas, hats, caps, and programmes flew up in a flurry of gesticulation all round the ground, while the shouting rose wave upon wave to a crescendo that seemed to go on for ever. The Villa centre-half raced back to his own end of the field, partly carrying and partly carried by half a dozen of his team-mates. A moment later the whistle blew for the restart, and then immediately for time. The score being level, an extra half-hour had to be played by regulation, and the first period of this started at once. It ended with no change,

and the sides crossed over. Tension grew as again the final minutes went by, and again it reached a crisis as the end approached. The game, in spite of its severity, had been played with a fairness that was a credit to professional football, but now, with two minutes to go, the referee, to the consternation of forty thousand people, awarded a penalty kick against the Villa for a foul in the penalty area. Heedless of all protests, he pointed to the spot twelve yards from the Villa goal, from which an Arsenal player was to be allowed a shot with nothing between him and the net but the Villa goal-keeper. As the preparations for this were made, Adam could hardly believe his eyes. Desperately as he wanted Arsenal to win, this, as he found himself announcing confusedly to his uncle, hardly seemed cricket. Robinson said that the odds on Arsenal scoring were about twenty to one.

The ball was placed on the spot, all the Villa men but the keeper being sent out of the penalty area. The Arsenal team stood behind the ball, up the field. One of them advanced, facing the miserable keeper, who stood on the line at the centre of his charge. Taking a short run, the Arsenal player sent the ball rising with amazing velocity towards the top corner of the net. The goal-keeper, anticipating its direction by some inspired instinct, made an upward dive with outstretched hands towards its flight, miraculously reached it with the tips of his fingers, and deflected its course. As it soared above the cross-bar the crowd let itself go for the third time in the afternoon. Arsenal took their corner kick, a Villa defender headed it out of danger, the whistle went and the game was over.

"What happens now?" asked Jane.

"They replay on a neutral ground," answered Robinson.

"I bet we shall win there," said Adam.

JOHN DRINKWATER—*Robinson of England.*



SCOTLAND v. AUSTRALIA

THAT year the Antipodes had dispatched to Britain such a constellation of Rugby stars that the hearts of the home enthusiasts became as water, and their joints were loosened. For years they had known and suffered from the quality of those tall young men from the South, whom the sun had toughened and tautened—their superb physique, their resourcefulness, their uncanny combination. Hitherto, while the fame of one or two players had reached these shores, the teams had been in the main a batch of dark horses, and there had been no exact knowledge to set a bar to hope. But now

Australia had gathered herself together for a mighty effort, and had sent to the field a fifteen most of whose members were known only too well. She had collected her sons wherever they were to be found. Four had already played for British Universities; three had won a formidable repute in international matches in which their country of ultimate origin had entitled them to play. What club, county, or nation could resist so well equipped an enemy? And, as luck decided, it fell to Scotland, which had been having a series of disastrous seasons, to take the first shock.

That ancient land seemed for the moment to have forgotten her prowess. She could produce a strong, hard-working, and effective pack, but her great three-quarter line had gone, and she had lost the scrum-half who the year before had been her chief support. Most of her fifteen were new to an international game, and had never played together. The danger lay in the enemy halves and three-quarters. The Kangaroos had two halves possessed of miraculous hands and a perfect knowledge of the game. They might be trusted to get the ball to their three-quarters, who were reputed the most formidable combination that ever played on turf. On the left wing was the mighty Charvill, an Oxford Blue and an English International; on the right Martineau, who had won fame on the cinder-track as well as on the football-field. The centres were two cunning brothers, Clauson by name, who played in a unison like Siamese twins. Against such a four Scotland could scrape up only a quartet of possibles, men of promise but not yet of performance. The hosts of Tuscany seemed strong out of all proportion to the puny de-

fenders of Rome. And as the Scottish right-wing three-quarter, to frustrate the terrible Charvill, stood the tiny figure of J. Galt ("Jaikie"), Cambridge University, five foot six inches in height and slim as a wagtail.

To the crowd of sixty thousand and more that waited for the teams to enter the field there was vouchsafed one slender comfort. The weather was abominable. It had rained all the preceding night, and it was hoped that the ground might be soft, inclining to mud—mud dear to the heart of our islanders but hateful to men accustomed to the firm soil of the South.

The game began in a light drizzle, and for Scotland it began disastrously. The first scrimmage was in the centre of the ground, and the ball came out to the Kangaroo scrum-half, who sent it to his stand-off. From him it went to Clauson, and then to Martineau, who ran round his opposing wing, dodged the Scottish full-back, and scored a try, which was converted. After five minutes the Kangaroos led by five points.

Presently the Scottish forwards woke up, and there was a spell of stubborn defence. The Scottish full-back had a long shot at goal from a free kick, and missed, but for the rest most of the play was in the Scottish twenty-five. The Scottish pack strove their hardest, but they did no more than hold their opponents. Then once more came a quick heel out, which went to one of the Clausons, a smart cut-through, a try secured between the posts and easily converted. The score was now ten points to nil.

Depression settled upon the crowd as dark as the weather, which had stopped raining but had developed into a sour *haar*. Followed a period of constant kick-

ing into touch, a dull game which the Kangaroos were supposed to eschew. Just before half-time there was a thin ray of comfort. The Scottish left-wing three-quarter, one Smail, a Borderer, intercepted a Kangaroo pass and reached the enemy twenty-five before he was brought down from behind by Martineau's marvellous sprinting. He had been within sight of success, and half-time came with a faint hope that there was still a chance of averting a runaway defeat.

The second half began with three points to Scotland, secured from a penalty kick. Also the Scottish forwards seemed to have got a new lease of life. They carried the game well into the enemy territory, dribbling irresistibly in their loose rushes, and hooking and heeling in the grand manner from the scrums. The white uniforms of the Kangaroos were now plentifully soiled, and the dark blue of the Scots made them look the less bedraggled side. All but J. Galt. His duty had been that of desperate defence conducted with a resolute ferocity, and he had suffered in it. His jersey was half torn off his back, and his shorts were in ribbons; he limped heavily, and his small face looked as if it had been ground into the mud of his native land. He felt dull and stupid, as if he had been slightly concussed. His gift had hitherto been for invisibility; his fame had been made as a will-o'-the-wisp; now he seemed to be cast for the part of that Arnold von Winkelried who drew all the spears to his bosom.

The ball was now coming out to the Scottish halves, but they mishandled it. It seemed impossible to get their three-quarters going. The ball either went loose, or was intercepted, or the holder was promptly tackled,

and whenever there seemed a chance of a run there was always either a forward pass or a knock-on. At this period of the game the Scottish forwards were carrying everything on their shoulders, and their backs seemed hopeless. Any moment, too, might see the deadly echelon of the Kangaroo three-quarters ripple down the field.

And then came one of those sudden gifts of fortune which make Rugby an image of life. The ball came out from a heel in a scrum not far from the Kangaroo twenty-five, and went to the Kangaroo stand-off half. He dropped it, and, before he could recover, it was gathered by the Scottish stand-off. He sent it to Small, who passed back to the Scottish left-centre, one Morrison, an Academical from Oxford who had hitherto been pretty much of a passenger. Morrison had the good luck to have a clear avenue before him, and he had a gift of pace. Dodging the Kangaroo full-back with a neat swerve, he scored in the corner of the goal-line amid a pandemonium of cheers. The try was miraculously converted, and the score stood at ten points to eight, with fifteen minutes to play.

Now began an epic struggle, not the least dramatic in the history of the game since a century ago the Rugby schoolboy William Webb Ellis first "took the ball in his arms and ran with it." The Kangaroos had no mind to let victory slip from their grasp, and, working like one man, they set themselves to assure it. For a little their magnificent three-quarter line seemed to have dropped out of the picture, but now most theatrically it returned to it. From a scrum in the Kangaroo half of the field, the ball went to their stand-off

and from him to Martineau. At the moment the Scottish players were badly placed, for their three-quarters were standing wide in order to overlap the faster enemy line. It was a perfect occasion for one of Martineau's deadly runs. He was, however, well tackled by Morrison and passed back to his scrum-half, who kicked ahead towards the left wing to Charvill. The latter gathered the ball at top-speed, and went racing down the touch-line with nothing before him but the Scottish right-wing three-quarter. It seemed a certain score, and there fell on the spectators a sudden hush. That small figure, not hitherto renowned for pace, could never match the Australian's long, loping, deadly stride.

Had Jaikie had six more inches of height he would have failed. But a resolute small man who tackles low is the hardest defence to get round. Jaikie hurled himself at Charvill, and was handed off by a mighty palm. But he staggered back in the direction of his own goal, and there was just one fraction of a second for him to make another attempt. This time he succeeded. Charvill's great figure seemed to dive forward on the top of his tiny assailant, and the ball rolled into touch. For a minute, while the heavens echoed with the shouting, Jaikie lay on the ground bruised and winded. Then he got up, shook himself, like a heroic, bedraggled sparrow, and hobbled back to his place.

There were still five minutes before the whistle, and these minutes were that electric testing time, when one side is intent to consolidate a victory and the other resolute to avert too crushing a defeat. Scotland had never hoped to win; she had already done far better

than her expectations, and she gathered herself together for a mighty effort to hold what she had gained. Her hopes lay still in her forwards. Her backs had far surpassed their form, but they were now almost at their last gasp.

But in one of them there was a touch of that genius which can triumph over fatigue. Jaikie had never in his life played so gruelling a game. He was accustomed to being maltreated, but now he seemed to have been pounded and smothered and kicked and flung about till he doubted whether he had a single bone undamaged. His whole body was one huge ache. Only the brain under his thatch of hair was still working well. . . . The Kangaroo pack had gone down field with a mighty rush, and there was a scrum close to the Scottish twenty-five. The ball went out cleanly to one of the Clausons, but it was now very greasy, and the light was bad, and he missed his catch. More, he stumbled after it and fell, for he had had a punishing game. Jaikie on the wing suddenly saw his chance. He darted in and gathered the ball, dodging Clauson's weary tackle. There was no other man of his side at hand to take a pass, but there seemed just a slender chance for a cut-through. He himself of course would be downed by Charvill, but there was a fraction of a hope, if he could gain a dozen yards, that he might be able to pass to Smail, who was not so closely marked.

His first obstacle was the Kangaroo scrum-half, who had come across the field. To him he adroitly sold the dummy, and ran towards the right touch-line, since there was no sign of Smail. He had little hope of success, for it must be only a question of seconds before

he was brought down. He did not hear the roar from the spectators as he appeared in the open, for he was thinking of Charvill waiting for his revenge, and he was conscious that his heart was behaving violently quite outside its proper place. But he was also conscious that in some mysterious way he had got a second wind, and that his body seemed a trifle less leaden.

He was now past the half-way line, a little distance ahead of one of the Clausons, with no colleague near him, and with Charvill racing to intercept him. For one of Jaikie's inches there could be no hand-off, but he had learned in his extreme youth certain arts not commonly familiar to Rugby players. He was a most cunning dodger. To the yelling crowd he appeared to be aiming at a direct collision with the Kangaroo left-wing. But just as it looked as if a two-seater must meet a Rolls-Royce head-on at full speed, the two-seater swerved and Jaikie wriggled somehow below Charvill's arm. Then sixty thousand people stood up, waving caps and umbrellas and shouting like lunatics, for Charvill was prone on the ground, and Jaikie was stolidly cantering on.

He was now at the twenty-five line, and the Kangaroo full-back awaited him. This was a small man, very little taller than Jaikie, but immensely broad and solid, and a superlative place-kick. A different physique would have easily stopped the runner, now at the very limits of his strength, but the Kangaroo was too slow in his tackle to meet Jaikie's swerve. He retained indeed in his massive fist a considerable part of Jaikie's jersey, but the half-naked wearer managed to stumble on just ahead of him, and secured a try in the extreme corner.

There he lay with his nose in the mud, utterly breathless, but obscurely happy. He was still dazed and panting when a minute later the whistle blew, and a noise like the Last Trump told him that by a single point he had won the match for his country.

JOHN BUCHAN—*Castle Gay*.

THE BOAT RACE

It was a bright hot day in June. By the brink of the Thames, at one of its loveliest stretches, our party sat with parasols up, half reclining, in an open carriage.

About a furlong up-stream a silvery stone bridge, just mellowed by time, spanned the river with many fair arches. Through these the coming river peeped sparkling a long way above, then came meandering and shining down to where we sat. From that point it shot straight away in a broad stream of water a mile long, down to an island in mid-stream, a little fairy island with old trees and a white temple.

This noble reach of the silvery Thames was the Henley race-course. The starting-place was down at the island, while the goal was up at a point in the river below the bridge, but above the bend where we were stationed. Unruffled by the racing, we sat at our ease, enjoying the picture of the glorious stream, the mellow bridge crowded with carriages, and the green meadows opposite with the motley crowd streaming up and down.

Few things are more worthy a pen of fire than an English boat race. From our place near the winning-post we looked all down the river, and could just discern two whitish streaks on the water, one on each side

of the men or of their accoutrements. But the people of Devonshire, altogether unused to the splendour of well ordered camps, were overwhelmed with delight and awe. Descriptions of the martial pageant were circulated all over the kingdom. They contained much that was well fitted to gratify the vulgar appetite for the marvellous. For the Dutch army, composed of men who had been born in various climates, and had served under various standards, presented an aspect at once grotesque, gorgeous, and terrible to islanders who had, in general, a very indistinct notion of foreign countries.

First rode Macclesfield at the head of two hundred gentlemen, mostly of English blood, glittering in helmets and cuirasses, and mounted on Flemish war horses. Each was attended by a negro, brought from the sugar plantations on the Coast of Guiana. The citizens of Exeter, who had never seen so many specimens of the African race, gazed with wonder on those black faces set off by embroidered turbans and white feathers. Then with drawn broad-swords came a squadron of Swedish horsemen in black armour and fur cloaks. They were regarded with a strange interest; for it was rumoured that they were natives of a land where the ocean was frozen and where the night lasted through half the year, and that they had themselves slain the huge bears whose skins they wore.

Next, surrounded by a goodly company of gentlemen and pages, was borne aloft the Prince's banner. On its broad folds the crowd which covered the roofs and filled the windows read with delight that memor-

cart horses to each. Much curiosity was excited by a strange structure mounted on wheels. It proved to be a movable smithy, furnished with all tools and materials necessary for repairing arms and carriages. But nothing raised so much admiration as the bridge of boats, which was laid with great speed on the Exe for the conveyance of wagons, and afterwards as speedily taken to pieces and carried away. It was made, if report said true, after a pattern contrived by the Christians who were warring against the Great Turk on the Danube.

The foreigners inspired as much goodwill as admiration. Their politic leader took care to distribute the quarters in such a manner as to cause the smallest possible inconvenience to the inhabitants of Exeter and of the neighbouring villages. The most rigid discipline was maintained. Not only were pillage and outrage effectually prevented, but the troops were required to demean themselves with civility towards all classes. Those who had formed their notions of an army from the conduct of Kirke and his Lambs were amazed to see soldiers who never swore at a landlady or took an egg without paying for it. In return for this moderation the people furnished the troops with provisions in great abundance and at reasonable prices.

~ LORD MACAULAY—*History of England.*

been found a match for the cool science of the veteran who now rode in friendship by his side.

Then came a long column of the whiskered infantry of Switzerland, distinguished in all the continental wars of two centuries by pre-eminent valour and discipline, but never till that week seen on English ground. And then marched a succession of bands designated, as was the fashion of that age, after their leaders, Bentinck, Solmes and Ginkell, Talmash and Mackay. With peculiar pleasure Englishmen might look on one gallant regiment which still bore the name of the honoured and lamented Ossory.

The effect of the spectacle was heightened by the recollection of the renowned events in which many of the warriors now pouring through the West Gate had borne a share. For they had seen service very different from that of the Devonshire militia or of the camp at Hounslow. Some of them had repelled the fiery onset of the French on the field of Seneff; and others had crossed swords with the infidels in the cause of Christendom on that great day when the siege of Vienna was raised.

The very senses of the multitude were fooled by imagination. Newsletters conveyed to every part of the kingdom fabulous accounts of the size and strength of the invaders. It was affirmed that they were, with scarcely an exception, above six feet high, and that they wielded such huge pikes, swords, and muskets, as had never before been seen in England. Nor did the wonder of the population diminish when the artillery arrived, twenty-one huge pieces of brass cannon, which were with difficulty tugged along by sixteen

three miles from London to Cambridge between five in the morning and eight at night, a record easily broken in modern times by undergraduates on foot. Only the very best coaches had springs, and the cumbrous machines were seldom moved at a trot, except on the not infrequent appearance of a horseman of suspicious aspect. Highwaymen lurked in security in the unfelled thickets and unenclosed heaths, and were in league with many keepers of inns. In Scotland, indeed, the highwayman was unknown; he would have wearied of waiting for the rare passengers, and would have been little richer after their plunder than before. But in England no one began a journey wholly free from the fear of such encounters.

A more common sight upon the roads than the coach was the yet slower "hooded wagon," with passengers and luggage inside, and the carrier walking at the head of his eight horses. And more usual than any form of wheeled vehicle was the string of laden pack-horses, sometimes as many as fifty in a single file, following a leader with a bell round its neck.

During the war with France, the most usual route to the Continent lay through Harwich and Rotterdam. Travellers in an ordinary coach took two days between London and Harwich, and they were often held up a week at the port, waiting for weather in which to cross, with "nothing to do, poor fare and a terribly long bill" at the inn. The crossing itself might take another week, or might be accomplished in twenty-four hours if the breeze held and the French privateers from Dunkirk were avoided.

Even on the Great North Road, delays and perils were

ENGLISH ROADS

LONDON was the focus not only of literature, journalism and public views, but even of private correspondence. The General Post Office, with a staff of forty sorters, was established in Lombard Street, and nearly all letters in England sent by the public post had to pass through it: the first "cross posts," going straight between two important towns without touching London, were only set up a few years before Anne came to the throne. But in the rural parts letters were sent by private messengers to a much greater extent then than now. The London area already enjoyed a penny post, under the management of the Lombard Street Office, with delivery every few hours.

The time which it took for the Post Office to deliver letters in the country, like the pace of all traffic by land, varied greatly according to the wet or dry condition of the roads. The postboys reckoned to accomplish the journey from London to Edinburgh in six days on the average. But in the storms of winter, postboy, horse and mailbag were apt to disappear in crossing a flooded valley: the horse may well have been a greater loss than the letters, of which there was sometimes only one for all Scotland in the mail from London. On a fine summer day, a good coach-and-four could accomplish the fifty-

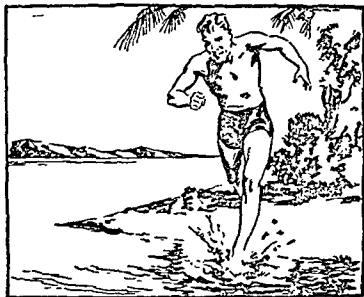
North and South Downs were deep in mud till the middle of a dry summer. One picture by Defoe stays in the mind:

Going to a Church in a country village not far from Lewis I saw an ancient lady, and a lady of very good quality I assure you, drawn to Church in her coach with six oxen; nor was it done in frolic or humour, but mere necessity, the way being so stiff and deep, that no horses could go in it.

The badness of the roads was due to the want of any adequate administrative machinery for their reconstruction or repair. Every parish through which a road passed was legally bound to maintain it by six days a year of unpaid labour given by the farmers, under no supervision save one of themselves chosen as surveyor. The unfairness of laying the burden of repair not on the users of the great roads, but on the parishes through which they happened to pass, was equalled by the folly of expecting farmers, who had no interest in the matter, to act gratuitously as skilled makers of highways. The result was that few hard roads had been made since the Romans left the island. In the Middle Ages, when there was little commerce, this had mattered but little. Under the later Stuarts, when commerce was large and rapidly increasing, it mattered much; it was beginning to be felt as a national disgrace. The new system of turnpikes to make the users of the road pay for its upkeep was therefore enforced in a few of the worst sections by Acts of Parliament. When Anne came to the throne the usual machinery of local justices of the

much increased in winter or foul weather. When in January 1709 the antiquarian Thoresby was leaving Huntingdon for London, the guide refused to proceed southward after a night of snow and flood. The party, however, rode on without him, causing the good folks of Royston to run out of their houses to gaze at such venturesome travellers. They made thirty miles that day and slept at Puckeridge. Next day they reached London, but not before Thoresby's horse had plunged belly deep into the water by the roadside at Enfield, "by the breaking of the ice."

Such in winter was the Great North Road itself, in its best section. North of Grantham it consisted only of a narrow stone causeway with soft ground on both sides. On such a highway wheeled traffic could scarcely pass in wet weather; and even horsemen, when shoved off the causeway by the pack-horse trains, sometimes had difficulty in getting back out of the morass into the middle of the road. Many highways were of this "causeway" type. Village roads were mere mud tracks or broad green lanes. It was well, perhaps, that so many roads were unenclosed for the greater part of their length, for passengers were therefore able to ride or walk off the morass of the road itself through the neighbouring heaths or corn-fields. Farmers complained, but the law upheld the rights of the distressed traveller in this matter. In enclosed counties like Kent, two horsemen could scarcely squeeze past one another at many points on the main road between London and Canterbury, and a coach entirely blocked the way between the hedges. The Weald of Sussex, described as "a sink fourteen miles broad," was so ill drained that the roads between the



A BATHE IN THE SEA OF GALILEE

Now I stood in the stillness of the morning looking down on the garden. The sun, rising from behind the Gergesene Hills, was climbing into the cloudless sky, and the garden was a network of sunlight and shade and full of the little early morning noises, the squeakings, the rustlings, the sound of wings, the cooing of pigeons and, from a fountain buried under trailing flowers, the falling of water.

The years fell shivering away from me and I was at that moment a small boy again, up and awake before anyone, looking out on the lovely world. I see .

Peace was employed to manage the turnpikes, but towards the end of the reign special bodies of Turnpike Trustees were sometimes established by Statute. It was not, however, till the House of Hanover had been some time on the throne that anything approaching a general reform was effected by this means.

G. M. TREVELYAN—*The England of Queen Anne.*

be a part of it and it seemed to be a part of me. The blue kingfisher, balancing himself on the very top of a fir tree, had come to say good morning to me, and the little black lizard on the path who, seeing me move, had stopped dead in his tracks with his head lifted, he also, sharing this moment, shared fellowship. The same joy in life that used to send me running over the meadows at sun-rise, that would draw me to the corner of woods where the rabbits played, and to the edge of streams where the trout lay, drove me now to feel and to touch the morning, and to hold it in my arms. I flung a towel over my shoulder and went down the garden to a path cut through rocks at the edge of the lake. It ran south into a dark wood of eucalyptus trees that melted into the broad deserted Plain of Gennesaret.

There was not a soul to be seen. At the edge of the wood a stream of fresh water flowed from a pool overhanging by precipitous crags. The pool was very still and deep. I flattened myself against a tree trunk and watched two kingfishers diving. They flew in circles over the pool and would suddenly begin to flutter in the air, at the same time pointing their long beaks towards the water until they looked like poised darts. Then they would drop like stones. They would touch the water swiftly and lightly and rise again; and, as they wheeled, the sun would shine a moment on the little silver fish in their beaks. The stones were covered with water tortoises. They looked like mud puddings, some dark from the water, others light and sun-dried. When I moved, they slid softly from their rocks into the pool.

The edge of the wood near the lake was a narrow

night, Mr. Bob Sawyer adjusted his skates with a dexterity which to Mr. Winkle was perfectly marvellous, and described circles with his left leg, and cut figures of eight, and inscribed upon the ice, without once stopping for breath, a great many other pleasant and astonishing devices, to the excessive satisfaction of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and the ladies: which reached a pitch of positive enthusiasm, when old Wardle and Benjamin Allen, assisted by the aforesaid Bob Sawyer, performed some mystic evolutions, which they called a reel.

All this time, Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on, with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone; "off with you, and show 'em how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching hold of Sam's arms with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!"

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air, and dash the back of his head on the ice

A DAY ON THE ICE

"Now," said Wardle, after a substantial lunch, with the agreeable items of strong beer and cherry-brandy, had been done ample justice to; "what say you to an hour on the ice? We shall have plenty of time."

"Capital!" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Prime!" ejaculated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"You skate, of course, Winkle?" said Wardle.

"Ye-yes; oh, yes," replied Mr. Winkle. "I—I—am *rather* out of practice."

"Oh, *do* skate, Mr. Winkle," said Arabella. "I like to see it so much."

"Oh, it is *so* graceful," said another young lady.

A third young lady said it was elegant, and a fourth expressed her opinion that it was "swan-like."

"I should be very happy, I'm sure," said Mr. Winkle, reddening; "but I have no skates."

This objection was at once overruled. Trundle had a couple of pair, and the fat boy announced that there were half-a-dozen more downstairs; whereat Mr. Winkle expressed exquisite delight, and looked exquisitely uncomfortable.

Old Wardle led the way to a pretty large sheet of ice; and the fat boy and Mr. Weller, having shovelled and swept away the snow which had fallen on it during the

"Here. I want you."

"Let go, sir," said Sam. "Don't you hear the governor a callin'? Let go, sir."

With a violent effort, Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonised Pickwickian, and, in so doing, administered a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have insured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel, at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind, in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic efforts to smile; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

"Are you hurt?" inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen, with great anxiety.

"Not much," said Mr. Winkle, rubbing his back very hard.

"I wish you'd let me bleed you," said Mr. Benjamin, with great eagerness.

"No, thank you," replied Mr. Winkle hurriedly.

"I really think you had better," said Allen.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Winkle; "I'd rather not."

"What do you think, Mr. Pickwick?" inquired Bob Sawyer.

Mr. Pickwick was excited and indignant. He beckoned to Mr. Weller, and said in a stern voice, "Take his skates off."

"These—these—are very awkward skates; ain't they, Sam?" inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"I'm afeerd there's a orkard gen'l'm'n in 'em, sir," replied Sam.

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile. "I'm coming."

"Just a goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavouring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam," gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most affectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them, Sam."

"Thank'ee, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, hastily. "You needn't take your hand away o do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas box, Sam. I'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You're very good, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Just hold me at first, Sam; will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam; not too fast."

Mr. Winkle stooping forward, with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller, in a very singular and un-swan-like manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank:

"Sam!"

"Sir?"

thoroughly out of breath, by reason of the indefatigable manner in which he had converted his legs into a pair of compasses, and drawn complicated problems on the ice.

"Ah, it does indeed," replied Wardle. "Do you slide?"

"I used to do so, on the gutters, when I was a boy," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Try it now," said Wardle.

"Oh do, please, Mr. Pickwick!" cried all the ladies.

"I should be very happy to afford you any amusement," replied Mr. Pickwick, "but I haven't done such a thing these thirty years."

"Pooh! pooh! Nonsense!" said Wardle, dragging off his skates with the impetuosity which characterised all his proceedings. "Here; I'll keep you company; come along!" And away went the good-tempered old fellow down the slide, with a rapidity which came very close upon Mr. Weller, and beat the fat boy all to nothing.

Mr. Pickwick paused, considered, pulled off his gloves and put them in his hat: took two or three short runs, baulked himself as often, and at last took another run, and went slowly and gravely down the slide, with his feet about a yard and a quarter apart, amidst the gratified shouts of all the spectators.

"Keep the pot a bilin', sir!" said Sam; and down went Wardle again, and then Mr. Pickwick, and then Sam, and then Mr. Winkle, and then Mr. Bob Sawyer, and then the fat boy, and then Mr. Snodgrass, following closely upon each other's heels, and running after each other with as much eagerness as if all their future

"No; but really I had scarcely begun," remonstrated Mr. Winkle.

"Take his skates off," repeated Mr. Pickwick firmly.

The command was not to be resisted. Mr. Winkle allowed Sam to obey it in silence.

"Lift him up," said Mr. Pickwick. Sam assisted him to rise.

Mr. Pickwick retired a few paces apart from the bystanders; and, beckoning his friend to approach, fixed a searching look upon him, and uttered in a low, but distinct and emphatic tone, these remarkable words:

"You're a humbug, sir."

"A what?" said Mr. Winkle, starting.

"A humbug, sir. I will speak plainer, if you wish it. An impostor, sir."

With those words, Mr. Pickwick turned slowly on his heel, and rejoined his friends.

While Mr. Pickwick was delivering himself of the sentiment just recorded, Mr. Weller and the fat boy, having by their joint endeavours cut out a slide, were exercising themselves thereupon, in a very masterly and brilliant manner. Sam Weller, in particular, was displaying that beautiful feat of fancy sliding which is currently denominated "knocking at the cobbler's door," and which is achieved by skimming over the ice on one foot, and occasionally giving a postman's knock upon it with the other. It was a good long slide, and there was something in the motion which Mr. Pickwick, who was very cold with standing still, could not help envying.

"It looks a nice warm exercise that, doesn't it?" he inquired of Wardle, when that gentleman was

Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle grasped each other by the hand, and gazed at the spot where their leader had gone down, with frenzied eagerness: while Mr. Tupman, by way of rendering the promptest assistance, and at the same time conveying to any persons who might be within hearing, the clearest possible notion of the catastrophe, ran off across the country at his utmost speed, screaming "Fire!" with all his might.

It was at this moment, when old Wardle and Sam Weller were approaching the hole with cautious steps, and Mr. Benjamin Allen was holding a hurried consultation with Mr. Bob Sawyer, on the advisability of bleeding the company generally, as an improving little bit of professional practice—it was at this very moment, that a face, head, and shoulders emerged from beneath the water, and disclosed the features and spectacles of Mr. Pickwick.

"Keep yourself up for an instant—for only one instant!" bawled Mr. Snodgrass.

"Yes, do; let me implore you—for my sake!" roared Mr. Winkle, deeply affected. The adjuration was rather unnecessary; the probability being, that if Mr. Pickwick had declined to keep himself up for anybody else's sake, it would have occurred to him that he might as well do so, for his own.

"Do you feel the bottom there, old fellow?" said Wardle.

"Yes, certainly," replied Mr. Pickwick, wringing the water from his head and face, and gasping for breath. "I fell upon my back. I couldn't get on my feet at first."

The clay upon so much of Mr. Pickwick's coat as was

prospects in life depended on their expedition.

It was the most intensely interesting thing, to observe the manner in which Mr. Pickwick performed his share in the ceremony; to watch the torture of anxiety with which he viewed the person behind, gaining upon him at the imminent hazard of tripping him up; to see him gradually expend the painful force he had put on at first, and turn slowly round on the side, with his face towards the point from which he had started; to contemplate the playful smile which mantled on his face when he had accomplished the distance, and the eagerness with which he turned round when he had done so, and ran after his predecessor: his black gaiters tripping pleasantly through the snow, and his eyes beaming cheerfulness and gladness through his spectacles. And when he was knocked down (which happened upon the average every third round), it was the most invigorating sight that can possibly be imagined, to behold him gather up his hat, gloves, and handkerchief, with a glowing countenance, and resume his station in the rank, with an ardour and enthusiasm that nothing could abate.

The sport was at its height, the sliding was at the quickest, the laughter was at the loudest, when a sharp smart crack was heard. There was a quick rush towards the bank, a wild scream from the ladies, and a shout from Mr. Tupman. A large mass of ice disappeared; the water bubbled up over it; Mr. Pickwick's hat, gloves, and handkerchief were floating on the surface; and this was all of Mr. Pickwick that anybody could see.

Dismay and anguish were depicted on every countenance, the males turned pale, and the females fainted.

Mr. Pickwick paused not an instant until he was snug in bed. Sam Weller lighted a blazing fire in the room, and took up his dinner; a bowl of punch was carried up afterwards, and a grand carouse held in honour of his safety.

CHARLES DICKENS—*The Pickwick Papers.*

THE FIGHT WITH THE FLAMING TINMAN

Two mornings after, I sat by my fire at the bottom of the dingle; I had just breakfasted, and had finished the last morsel of food which I had brought with me to that solitude.

"What shall I now do?" said I, to myself; "shall I continue here, or decamp—this is a sad, lonely spot—perhaps I had better quit it; but whither should I go? the wide world is before me, but what can I do therein? I have been in the world already without much success. No, I had better remain here; the place is lonely, it is true, but here I am free and independent, and can do what I please; but I can't remain here without food. Well, I will find my way to the nearest town, lay in a fresh supply of provision, and come back, turning my back upon the world, which has turned its back upon me. I don't see why I should not write a little sometimes; I have pens and an ink-horn, and for a writing-desk I can place the Bible on my knee. I shouldn't wonder if I could write a capital satire on the world on the back of that Bible; but first of all I must think of supplying myself with food."

I rose up from the stone on which I sat, and, intending to go to the nearest town, and cart, and procure what I wanted.

according to my best calculation, lay about five miles distant; I had no doubt, however, that by using ordinary diligence, I should be back before evening. In order to go lighter, I determined to leave my tent standing as it was, and all the things which I had purchased of the tinker, just as they were. "I need not be apprehensive on their account," said I, to myself; "nobody will come here to meddle with them—the great recommendation of this place is its perfect solitude—I dare say that I could live here six months without seeing a single human visage. I will now harness my little gry and be off to the town."

At a whistle which I gave, the little gry, which was feeding on the bank near the uppermost part of the dingle, came running to me, for by this time he had become so accustomed to me, that he would obey my call for all the world as if he had been one of the canine species. "Now," said I to him, "we are going to the town to buy bread for myself, and oats for you—I am in a hurry to be back; therefore, I pray you to do your best, and to draw me and the cart to town, with all possible speed, and to bring us back; if you do your best, I promise you oats on your return. You know the meaning of oats, Ambrol?"

Ambrol whinnied as if to let me know that he understood me perfectly well, as indeed he well might, as I had never once fed him during the time he had been in my possession without saying the word in question to him. Now, Ambrol, in the Gipsy tongue, signifieth a pear.

So I caparisoned Ambrol, and then, going to the cart, I removed two or three things from out it into the tent;

I then lifted up the shafts, and was just going to call to the pony to come and be fastened to them, when I thought I heard a noise.

I stood stock still, supporting the shafts of the little cart in my hand, and bending the right side of my face slightly towards the ground; but I could hear nothing; that noise which I thought I had heard was not one of those sounds which I was accustomed to hear in that solitude, the note of a bird, or the rustling of a bough; it was—there I heard it again, a sound very much resembling the grating of a wheel amongst gravel. Could it proceed from the road? Oh no, the road was too far distant for me to hear the noise of anything moving along it. Again I listened, and now I distinctly heard the sound of wheels, which seemed to be approaching the dingle; nearer and nearer they drew, and presently the sound of wheels was blended with the murmur of voices. Anon I heard a boisterous shout, which seemed to proceed from the entrance of the dingle. "Here are folks at hand," said I, letting the shafts of the cart fall to the ground, "is it possible that they can be coming here?"

My doubts on that point, if I entertained any, were soon dispelled; the wheels, which had ceased moving for a moment or two, were once again in motion, and were now evidently moving down the winding path which led to my retreat. Leaving my cart, I came forward and placed myself near the entrance of the open space, with my eyes fixed on the path down which my unexpected and I may say unwelcome visitors were coming. Presently I heard a stamping or sliding, as if of a horse in some difficulty; and then a loud curse, and

the next moment appeared a man and a horse and cart; the former holding the head of the horse up to prevent him from falling, of which he was in danger, owing to the precipitous nature of the path. Whilst thus occupied, the head of the man was averted from me. When, however, he had reached the bottom of the descent, he turned his head; and perceiving me, as I stood bare-headed, without either coat or waistcoat, about two yards from him, he gave a sudden start, so violent, that the backward motion of his hand had nearly flung the horse upon his haunches.

"Why don't you move forward?" said a voice from behind, apparently that of a female, "you are stopping up the way, and we shall be all down upon one another"; and I saw the head of another horse overtopping the back of the cart.

"Why don't you move forward, Jack?" said another voice, also of a female, yet higher up the path.

The man stirred not, but remained staring at me in the posture which he had assumed on first perceiving me, his body very much drawn back, his left foot far in advance of his right, and with his right hand still grasping the halter of the horse, which gave way more and more, till it was clean down on its haunches.

"What is the matter?" said the voice which I had last heard.

"Get back with you, Belle, Moll," said the man, still staring at me, "here's something not over-canny or comfortable."

"What is it?" said the same voice; "let me pass, Moll, and I'll soon clear the way," and I heard a kind of rushing down the path.



or, to speak more proper, half and halves, I would have you to know that I come of Christian blood and parents, and was born in the great house of Long Melford."

"I have no doubt," said I, "that it was a great house; judging from your size, I shouldn't wonder if you were born in a church."

"Stay, Belle," said the man, putting himself before the young virago, who was about to rush upon me, "my turn is first"—then, advancing to me in a menacing attitude, he said, with a look of deep malignity, "'Afraid,' was the word, wasn't it?"

"It was," said I, "but I think I wronged you; I should have said, aghast; you exhibited every symptom of one labouring under uncontrollable fear."

The fellow stared at me with a look of stupid ferocity, and appeared to be hesitating whether to strike or not; ere he could make up his mind, the tall girl stepped forward, crying, "He's chaffing; let me at him"; and, before I could put myself on my guard, she struck me a blow on the face which had nearly brought me to the ground.

"Enough," said I, putting my hand to my cheek; "you have now performed your promise, and made me wipe my face: now be pacified, and tell me fairly the grounds of this quarrel."

"Grounds!" said the fellow; "didn't you say I was afraid; and if you hadn't, who gave you leave to camp on my ground?"

"Is it your ground?" said I.

"A pretty question," said the fellow; "as if all the world didn't know that. Do you know who I am?"

"I guess I do," said I; "unless I am much mistaken,

you are he whom folks call the 'Flaming Tinman.' To tell you the truth, I'm glad we have met, for I wished to see you. These are your two wives, I suppose; I greet them. There's no harm done—there's room enough here for all of us—we shall soon be good friends, I dare say; and when we are a little better acquainted, I'll tell you my history."

"Well, if that doesn't beat all," said the fellow.

"I don't think he's chaffing now," said the girl, whose anger seemed to have subsided on a sudden; "the young man speaks civil enough."

"Civil," said the fellow, with an oath; "but that's just like you; with you it is a blow, and all over. Civil! I suppose you would have him stay here, and get into all my secrets, and hear all I may have to say to my two morts."

"Two morts," said the girl, kindling up, "where are they? Speak for one, and no more. I am no mort of yours, whatever someone else may be. I tell you one thing, Black John, or Anselo, for I'other an't your name, the same thing I told the young man here, be civil, or you will rue it."

The fellow looked at the girl furiously, but his glance soon quailed before hers; he withdrew his eyes, and cast them on my little horse, which was feeding amongst the trees. "What's this?" said he, rushing forward and seizing the animal. "Why, as I am alive, this is the horse."

"I would seize it the next time I found it on my beat; ay, and beat the master too."

"I am not Slingsby."

"All's one for that."

"You don't say you will beat me?"

"Afraid was the word."

"I'm sick and feeble."

"Hold up your fists."

"Won't the horse satisfy you?"

"Horse nor bellows either."

"No mercy then."

"Here's at you."

"Mind your eyes, Jack. There, you've got it. I thought so," shouted the girl, as the fellow staggered back from a sharp blow in the eye. "I thought he was chaffing you all along."

"Never mind, Anselo. You know what to do—go in," said the vulgar woman, who had hitherto not spoken a word, but who now came forward with all the look of a fury; "go in apopli; vash ten like he."

The Flaming Tinman took her advice, and came in

"Pay him off now," said the vulgar woman. The Flaming Tinman made no reply, but planting his knee on my breast, seized my throat with two huge horny hands. I gave myself up for dead, and probably should have been so in another minute but for the tall girl, who caught hold of the handkerchief which the fellow wore round his neck with a grasp nearly as powerful as that with which he pressed my throat.

"Do you call that fair play?" said she.

"Hands off, Belle," said the other woman; "do you call it fair play to interfere? hands off, or I'll be down upon you myself."

But Belle paid no heed to the injunction, and tugged so hard at the handkerchief, that the Flaming Tinman was nearly throttled; suddenly relinquishing his hold of me, he started on his feet, and aimed a blow at my fair preserver, who avoided it, but said coolly:

"Finish t'other business first, and then I'm your woman whenever you like; but finish it fairly—no foul play when I'm by—I'll be the boy's second, and Moll can pick you up when he happens to knock you down."

The battle during the next ten minutes raged with considerable fury, but it so happened that during this time I was never able to knock the Flaming Tinman down, but on the contrary received six knock-down blows myself. "I can never stand this," said I, as I sat on the knee of Belle, "I am afraid I must give in; the Flaming Tinman hits very hard," and I spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Sure enough you'll never beat the Flaming Tinman in the way you fight—it's of no use flipping at the

struck the Tinker beneath the ear was a right-handed blow.

"Hurrah for Long Melford!" I heard Belle exclaim; "there is nothing like Long Melford for shortness all the world over."

At these words, I turned round my head as I lay and perceived the Flaming Tinman stretched upon the ground apparently senseless. "He is dead," said the vulgar woman, as she vainly endeavoured to raise him up; "he is dead; the best man in all the north country, killed in this fashion, by a boy." Alarmed at these words, I made shift to get on my feet; and, with the assistance of the woman, placed my fallen adversary in a sitting posture. I put my hand to his heart, and felt a slight pulsation—"He's not dead," said I, "only stunned; if he were let blood, he would recover presently." I produced a penknife which I had in my pocket, and, baring the arm of the Tinman, was about to make the necessary incision, when the woman gave me a violent blow, and, pushing me aside, exclaimed, "I'll tear the eyes out of your head, if you offer to touch him. Do you want to complete your work, and murder him outright, now he's asleep? you have had enough of his blood already." "You are mad," said I, "I only seek to do him service. Well, if you won't let him be blooded, fetch some water and fling it into his face, you know where the pit is."

"A pretty manœuvre," said the woman; "leave my husband in the hands of you and that limmer, who has never been true to us; I should find him strangled or his throat cut when I came back." "Do you go," said I, to the tall girl, "take the can and fetch some

Flaming Tinman with your left hand; why don't you use your right?"

"Because I'm not handy with it," said I; and then getting up, I once more confronted the Flaming Tinman, and struck him six blows for his one, but they were all left-handed blows, and the blow which the Flaming Tinman gave me knocked me off my legs.

"Now, will you use Long Melford?" said Belle, picking me up.

"I don't know what you mean by Long Melford," said I, gasping for breath.

"Why, this long right of yours," said Belle, feeling my right arm—"if you do, I shouldn't wonder if you yet stand a chance."

And now the Flaming Tinman was once more ready, much more ready than myself. I, however, rose from my second's knee as well as my weakness would permit me. On he came, striking left and right, appearing almost as fresh as to wind and spirit as when he first commenced the combat, though his eyes were considerably swelled, and his nether lip was cut in two; on he came, striking left and right, and I did not like his blows at all, or even the wind of them, which was anything but agreeable, and I gave way before him. At last he aimed a blow, which, had it taken full effect, would doubtless have ended the battle, but owing to his slipping, the first only grazed my left shoulder, and came with terrific force against a tree, close to which I had been driven; before the tinman could recover himself, I collected all my strength, and struck him beneath the ear, and then fell to the ground completely exhausted, and it so happened that the blow which I

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water from the pit," "You had better go yourself," said the girl, wiping a tear as she looked on the yet senseless form of the tinker; "you had better go yourself, if you think water will do him good." I had by this time somewhat recovered my exhausted powers, and, taking the can, I bent my steps as fast as I could to the pit; arriving there, I lay down on the brink, took a long draught, and then plunged my head into the water; after which I filled the can, and bent my way back to the dingle. Before I could reach the path which led down into its depths, I had to pass some way along its side; I had arrived at a part immediately over the scene of the last encounter, where the bank, overgrown with trees, sloped precipitously down. Here I heard a loud sound of voices in the dingle; I stopped, and laying hold of a tree, leaned over the bank and listened. The two women appeared to be in hot dispute in the dingle. "It was all owing to you, you limmer," said the vulgar woman to the other; "had you not interfered, the old man would soon have settled the boy."

"I'm for fair play and Long Melford," said the other. "If your old man, as you call him, could have settled the boy fairly, he might, for all I should have cared, but no foul work for me; and as for sticking the boy with our gulleys when he comes back, as you proposed, I am not so fond of your old man or you that I should oblige you in it, to my soul's destruction." "Hold your tongue, or I'll——!" I listened no farther, but hastened as fast as I could to the dingle. My adversary had just begun to show signs of animation; the vulgar woman was still supporting him, and occasionally

cast glances of anger at the tall girl, who was walking slowly up and down. I lost no time in dashing the greater part of the water into the Tinman's face, whereupon he sneezed, moved his hands, and presently looked round him. At first his looks were dull and heavy, and without any intelligence at all; he soon, however, began *to recollect himself, and to be conscious of his situation*; he cast a scowling glance at me, then one of the deepest malignity at the tall girl, who was still walking about without taking much notice of what was going forward. At last he looked at his right hand, which had evidently suffered from the blow against the tree, and a half-stifled curse escaped his lips. The vulgar woman now said something to him in a low tone, whereupon he looked at her for a moment, and then got upon his legs. Again the vulgar woman said something to him; her looks were furious, and she appeared to be urging him *on to attempt something*. I observed that she had a clasped knife in her hand. The fellow remained standing for some time as if hesitating what to do, at last he looked at his hand, and, shaking his head, said something to the woman which I did not understand. The tall girl, however, appeared to overhear him, and probably repeating his words, said, "No, it won't do; you are right there, and now hear what I have to say—let bygones be bygones, and let us all shake hands, and camp here, as the young man was saying just now." The man looked at her, and then, without any reply, went to his horse, which was lying down among the trees, and kicking it up, led it to the cart, to which he forthwith began to harness it. The other cart and horse had remained standing motionless during the

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donkey-cart, which I concluded belonged to the girl. The tinker and his mort were already at some distance; I stood looking after them for some little time, then taking the donkey by the reins I led it with the cart to the bottom of the dingle. Arrived there, I found Belle seated on the stone by the fireplace. Her hair was all dishevelled, and she was in tears.

"They were bad people," she said, "and I did not like them, but they were my only acquaintance in the wide world."

GEORGE BORROW—*Lavengro.*

whole affair which I have been recounting, at the bottom of the pass. The woman now took the horse by the head, and leading it with the cart into the open part of the dingle turned both round, and then led them back, till the horse and cart had mounted a little way up the ascent; she then stood still and appeared to be expecting the man. During this proceeding Belle had stood looking on without saying anything; at last, perceiving that the man had harnessed his horse to the other cart, and that both he and the woman were about to take their departure, she said, "You are not going, are you?" Receiving no answer, she continued: "I tell you what, both of you, Black John, and you Moll, his mort, this is not treating me over civilly—however, I am ready to put up with it, and go with you if you like, for I bear no malice. I'm sorry for what has happened, but you have only yourselves to thank for it. Now, shall I go with you, only tell me?" The man made no manner of reply, but flogged his horse. The woman, however, whose passions were probably under less control, replied, with a screeching tone, "Stay where you are, you jade, and may the curse of Judas cling to you—stay with the bit of a mullo whom you helped, and my only hope is that he may gulley you before he comes to be—— Have you with us, indeed! after what's past, no, nor nothing belonging to you. Fetch down your mailla go-cart and live here with your chabo." She then whipped on the horse, and ascended the pass, followed by the man. The carts were light, and they were not long in ascending the winding path. I followed to see that they took their departure. Arriving at the top, I found near the entrance a small

know, how Bob's eye at a glance announced a dog-fight to his brain? He did not, he could not see the dogs fighting; it was a flash of an inference, a rapid induction. The crowd round a couple of dogs fighting, is a crowd, masculine mainly, with an occasional active, compassionate woman, fluttering wildly round the outside, and using her tongue and her hands freely upon the men, as so many "brutes"; it is a crowd annular, compact, and mobile; a crowd centripetal, having its eyes and its heads all bent downwards and inwards, to one common focus.

Well, Bob and I are up, and find it is not over: a small, thoroughbred, white bull-terrier, is busy throttling a large shepherd's dog, unaccustomed to war, but not to be trifled with. They are hard at it; the scientific little fellow doing his work in great style, his pastoral enemy fighting wildly, but with the sharpest of teeth and a great courage. Science and breeding, however, soon took their own; the Game Chicken, as the premature Bob called him, working his way up, took his final grip of poor Yarrow's throat,—and he lay gasping and done for. His master, a brown, handsome, big young shepherd from Tweedsmuir, would have liked to have knocked down any man, "drunk up Esil, or eaten a crocodile," for that part, if he had a chance: it was no use kicking the little dog; that would only make him hold the closer. Many were the means shouted out in mouthfuls, of the best possible ways of ending it. "Water!" but there was none near, and many shouted for it who might have got it from the well at Blackfriars Wynd. "Bite the tail!" and a large, vague, benevolent, middle-aged man, more

A DOG-FIGHT

FOUR-AND-THIRTY years ago, Bob Ainslie and I were coming up Infirmary Street from the High School, our heads together, and our arms inter-twisted, as only lovers and boys know how, or why.

When we got to the top of the street, and turned north, we espied a crowd at the Tron Church. "A dog-fight!" shouted Bob, and was off; and so was I, both of us all but praying that it might not be over before we got up! and is not this boy-nature? and human nature too? and don't we all wish a house on fire not to be out before we see it? Dogs like fighting; old Isaac says they "delight" in it, and for the best of all reasons; and boys are not cruel because they like to see the fight. They see three of the great cardinal virtues of dog or man—courage, endurance, and skill—in intense action. This is very different from a love of making dogs fight, and enjoying, and aggravating, and making gain by their pluck. A boy—be he ever so fond himself of fighting, if he be a good boy, hates and despises all this, but he would have run off with Bob and me fast enough: it is a natural, and a not wicked interest, that all boys and men have in witnessing intense energy in action.

Does any curious and finely-ignorant woman wish to

know, how Bob's eye at a glance announced a dog-fight to his brain? He did not, he could not see the dogs fighting; it was a flash of an inference, a rapid induction. The crowd round a couple of dogs fighting, is a crowd, masculine mainly, with an occasional active, compassionate woman, fluttering wildly round the outside, and using her tongue and her hands freely upon the men, as so many "brutes"; it is a crowd annular, compact, and mobile; a crowd centripetal, having its eyes and its heads all bent downwards and inwards, to one common focus.

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anxious than wise, with some struggle got the bushy end of *Yarrow's* tail into his ample mouth, and bit it with all his might. This is more than enough for the much-enduring, much-perspiring shepherd, who, with a gleam of joy over his broad visage, delivered a terrific facer upon our large, vague, benevolent, middle-aged friend,—who went down like a shot.

Still the Chicken holds; death not far off. "Snuff! a pinch of snuff!" observed sharply a calm, highly-dressed young buck, with an eye-glass in his eye. "Snuff, indeed!" growled the angry crowd, affronted and glaring. "Snuff! a pinch of snuff!" again observes the buck, but with more urgency; whereon were produced several open boxes, and from a mull which may have been at Culloden, he took a pinch, knelt down, and presented it to the nose of the Chicken. The laws of physiology and of snuff take their course; the Chicken sneezes, and *Yarrow* is free!

The young pastoral giant stalks off with *Yarrow* in his arms,—comforting him.

But the Chicken's blood is up, and his soul unsatisfied; he grips the first dog he meets, but discovering she is not a dog, in Homeric phrase, he makes a brief sort of *amende*, and is off. The boys, with Bob and me at their head, are after him; down Niddry Street he goes, bent on mischief; up the Cowgate like an arrow—Bob and I, and our small men, panting behind.

There, under the large arch of the South Bridge, is a huge mastiff, sauntering down the middle of the causeway, as if with his hands in his pockets: he is old, grey, brindled; as big as a little Highland bull, and has the Shakesperian dewlaps shaking as he goes.

The Chicken makes straight at him, and fastens on his throat. To our astonishment, the great creature does nothing but stand still, hold himself up, and roar—yes, roar; a long, serious, remonstrative roar. How is this? Bob and I are up to them. *He is muzzled!* The baillie had proclaimed a general muzzling, and his master, studying strength and economy mainly, had encompassed his huge jaws in a home-made apparatus, constructed out of the leather of some ancient breechin. His mouth was open as far as it could; his lips curled up in rage—a sort of terrible grin; his teeth gleaming, ready, from out the darkness; the strap across his mouth tense as a bowstring; his whole frame stiff with indignation and surprise; his roar asking us all round, “Did you ever see the like of this?” He looked a statue of anger and astonishment, done in Aberdeen granite.

We soon had a crowd: the Chicken held on. “A knife!” cried Bob; and a cobbler gave him his knife: you know the kind of knife, worn away obliquely to a point, and always keen. I put its edge to the tense leather; it ran before it; and then! one sudden jerk of that enormous head, a sort of dirty mist about his mouth, no noise,—and the bright and fierce little fellow is dropped, limp, and dead. A solemn pause; this was more than any of us had bargained for. I turned the little fellow over, and saw he was quite dead; the mastiff had taken him by the small of the back like a rat, and broken it.

He looked down at his victim, appeased, ashamed, and amazed; snuffed him all over, stared at him, and taking a sudden thought, turned round and trotted off. Bob

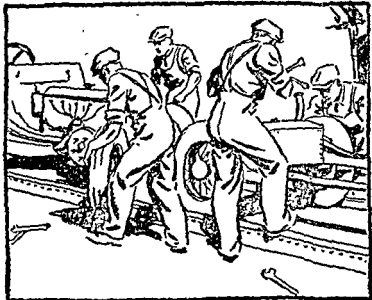
took the dead dog up, and said, "John, we'll bury him after tea." "Yes," said I; and was off after the mastiff. He made up the Cowgate at a rapid swing; he had forgotten some engagement. He turned up the Candle-maker Row, and stopped at the Harrow Inn.

There was a carrier's cart ready to start, and a keen, thin, impatient, black-a-vised little man, his hand at his grey horse's head, looking about angrily for something. "Rab, ye thief!" said he, aiming a kick at my great friend, who drew cringing up, and avoiding the heavy shoe with more agility than dignity, and watching his master's eye, slunk dismayed under the cart,—his ears down, and as much as he had of tail down too.

What a man this must be—thought I—to whom my tremendous hero turns tail! The carrier saw the muzzle hanging, cut and useless, from his neck, and I eagerly told him the story, which Bob and I always thought, and still think, Homer, or King David, or Sir Walter, alone were worthy to rehearse. The severe man was mitigated, and condescended to say, "Rab, my man, puir Rabbie,"—whereupon the stump of a tail rose up, the ears were cocked, the eyes filled, and were comforted; the two friends were reconciled. "Hupp!" and a stroke of the whip were given to Jess; and off went the three.

Bob and I buried the Game Chicken that night (we hadn't much of a tea) in the back-green of his house, in Melville Street, No. 17, with considerable gravity and silence; and being at the time in the Iliad, and, like all boys, Trojans, we called him, of course, Hector.

JOHN BROWN—*Rab and His Friends and Other Papers and Essays.*



COVENTRY AND CARS

COVENTRY is one of those towns that have often changed their trades and have had many vicissitudes, but, unlike nearly all the rest, it has managed to come out on top. In the thirteenth century, it was making cutlery. in the fourteenth, cloth; in the fifteenth, gloves; in the sixteenth, buttons; in the seventeenth, clocks; in the eighteenth, ribbons; in the nineteenth, sewing machines and bicycles; and now, in the twentieth, motor cars, wireless apparatus. s backed its fancy its population was

69,978; and its estimated population for this year is no less than 182,000; figures that suggest that the city has got lost in time and imagines that the Industrial Revolution is in full force. In the centre of the city, I found ample remains of the cutlery, cloth, button, clock and ribbon periods scattered about, now oddly mixed up with Lyons, cheap tailors, Ronald Colman, cut-price shops, berets, and loud speakers. It is genuinely old and picturesque: the cathedral of St. Michael's, St. Mary's Hall, Ford's and Bablake Hospitals, Butcher Row, and the old Palace Ward. You peep round a corner and see half-timbered and gabled houses that would do for the second act of the *Meistersinger*. In fact, you could stage the *Meistersinger*—or film it—in Coventry. I knew it was an old place—for wasn't there Lady Godiva?—but I was surprised to find how much of the past, in soaring stone and carved wood, still remained in the city. Though even here, in the centre, the two buildings that dominate the rest are new and enormous bank offices, very massive and Corinthian and designed to suggest that there is nothing wrong with our financial system. If you do not understand why our banks give so little interest on our loans to them and demand so much more interest on their loans to us, or why they are encouraged, for private profit, to exchange mere credit for solid buildings and machinery and businesses at work, you should go and have a look at those colossal white stone pillars of theirs in Coventry. Perhaps they will reassure you; that is what they are there to do.

These picturesque remains of the old Coventry are besieged by an army of nuts, bolts, hammers, spanners,

gauges, drills, and machine lathes, for in a thick ring round this ancient centre are the motor-car and cycle factories, the machine tool makers, the magneto manufacturers, and the electrical companies. Beyond them again are whole new quarters, where the mechanics and fitters and turners and furnace men live in neat brick rows, and drink their beer in gigantic new public houses and take their wives to gigantic new picture theatres. Tennyson, in his poem about *Godiva* that begins, so uncharacteristically, *I waited for a train at Coventry*, must have foreseen all this, for does he not mention there, "New men that in the flying of a wheel, Cry down the past . . ." Here are the new men and the flying wheels. Coventry seems to have acquired the trick of keeping up with the times, a trick that many of our industrial cities find hard to learn. It made bicycles when everybody was cycling, cars when everybody wanted a motor, and now it is also busy with aeroplanes, wireless sets, and various electrical contrivances, including the apparatus used by the Talkies. There are still plenty of unemployed here, about twelve thousand, I believe. But as I write, the place has passed its worst period of depression and unless this country reels back into a bottomless pit of trade depression, Coventry should be all right. Factories that were working on short time a year or two ago, are now in some instances back on double shifts. I saw their lights and heard the deep roar of their machinery, late that night.

My own car, a Daimler, was made in this city, and so after lunch I went out to see how they did it. I climbed a hill and there, just over the summit, were the Daimler works, like a young town of long brick

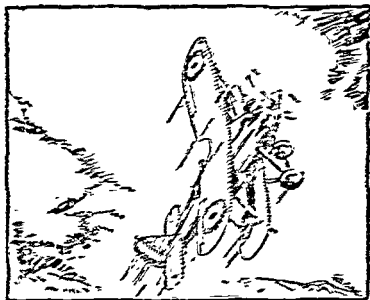
sheds. I was given a guide, an intelligent young engineer who took me first to the laboratory where a number of young men were enjoying themselves testing the various samples of metal. I took a hand myself in testing the hardness of a small metal part with a diamond point, which was connected with an indicator showing the degree of resistance in exact figures. In other rooms there were bubbling test-tubes and enlarged microscopic slides of sections of metal. In the manufacturing of motor cars, the metal's the thing, and it seems they are very scientific about it now. I was then taken through various huge sheds in which hundreds and hundreds of mechanics were at work making and testing parts. (There are about four thousand men employed here.) All these sheds were the same: a long vista of blue electric-light shades, a misty perspective of flywheels above and brown overalled men below. They were all hard at it and most of them were having a smoke too, for they are allowed to smoke for three-quarters of an hour in the morning and in the afternoon: a wise rule. Every man in these departments was limited to one job, but there was a certain amount of variety inside the job. This was not strictly mass production; there was no endless moving chain; there were no men restricted to putting on a bolt there, a nut here; it was highly organised large-scale jobbing production. Its size, my guide told me, was in its favour, because parts were put through tests that would be impossible in a tiny workshop. A manufacturer in a small way could not afford to use the various machines necessary for these tests, such as the machine, one I watched with interest, which tested the exact balance

of the flywheels and showed exactly where there was still a fraction too much metal on some segment. One had an impression of the most rigorous testing everywhere. The idea now is to cut down the preliminary trials of the finished car outside the factory, so the various parts—engine, gears, crankshafts, axles—are ferociously tried out before they are assembled. The modern motor car represents an astonishing feat of human ingenuity. Consider the number of them out on the roads and the extraordinarily few accidents due to any fault in the vehicle itself. If we were one half so clever in the matters that lie far outside machinery as we are about machinery itself, what people we should be and what a world we should leave our children! If life were only an internal combustion engine! The skill and the care that are lavished on these cylinders and pistons and gears! I have no doubt that boys and girls in Coventry are comparatively well looked after, but nobody has attended to them as their fathers are attending to the proud young Double-Six Daimlers.

There is a bus department in these works. I was allowed to see the giant steel entrails of these creatures. Two very fine specimens had just been completed, and my guide and I explored them, inside, top deck, and the driver's seat, where you suddenly feel very powerful. One of these grand new fellows, immensely powerful and roomy and ready to take you anywhere with its forty horses, costs between fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds. It would be a good idea, I said, to have one as a private car. It would be a better idea, I continued, to buy one and then rig it up as a caravan. As usual, I was not being original. The thing had already

been done. An ingenious sportsman had commissioned a caravan bus, with sitting-room, two bedrooms, kitchen and bath. I envy him. I ought to have one for this journey, and then I could travel amusingly and comfortably and be free of these beastly hotels. The only trouble is, I imagine, that a great many roads must be closed to buses this size, which are at once very high and very heavy. But I have no doubt that you could travel fairly easily in one—at about nine miles to the gallon—with your family or some friends aboard, from Land's End to John o' Groats. I commend the notion to anybody who has a couple of thousand pounds to play with and thinks he could drive a bus. And the young man from the Daimler works, who had driven everything, assured me that once you are familiar with the enormous length of a bus—and at first it must seem like turning a row of cottages round a corner, it is easier to drive than an ordinary car.

J. B. PRIESTLEY—*English Journey*.



A FIRST FLIGHT

PETER'S career as an infantryman never took him nearer to the western front than Lima Forest. Then he perceived the error of his way and decided to get a commission in the Royal Flying Corps. In those days the Flying Corps was still a limited and inaccessible force with a huge waiting list, and it needed a considerable exertion of influence to secure a footing in that select band. . . . But at last a day came when Peter, rather self-conscious in his new leather coat and cap, walked out from the mess past a group of staring

young pilots towards the aeroplane in which he was to have his first experience of flight.

He had a sense of being scrutinized, but indeed hardly anyone upon the aerodrome noted him. This sense of an audience made him deliberately casual in his bearing. He saluted his pilot in a manner decidedly offhand. He clambered up through struts and wire to the front seat as if he was a clerk ascending the morning omnibus, and strapped himself in as if it hardly mattered whether he was strapped in or not. "Contact, sir," said the mechanic. "Contact," came the pilot's voice from behind. The engine roared, a gale swept backwards, and Peter vibrated like an aspen leaf.

The wheels were cleared, the mechanics jumped aside, and Peter was careering across the grass in a series of light leaps, and then his progress became smoother. He did not perceive at first the reason for this sudden steadying of the machine. He found himself tilting upward. He was off the ground. He had been off the ground for some seconds. He looked over the side and saw the grass fifty feet below, and the black shadow of the aeroplane, as it fled before them, rushing at a hedge, doubling up at the hedge, and starting again in the next field. And up he went.

Peter stared at fields, hedges, trees, sheds and roadways growing small below him. He noted cows in plan and an automobile in plan, in a lane, going it seemed very slow indeed. It was a stagnant world below in comparison with his own forward sweep. His initial nervousness and self-consciousness had passed away. He was enormously interested and delighted. He was trying to remember when it was that Nobby

had said: "I doubt if we'll see that in my lifetime—or yours." It was somewhen long ago at Limsfield. Quite early. . . .

And then abruptly Peter was clutching the side with his thick-gloved hand; the aeroplane was coming round in a close curve and banking steeply, very steeply. For a moment it seemed as though there was nothing at all between him and England below. If he fell out——!

He looked over his shoulder and met the hard regard of a pair of steel-blue eyes.

He remembered that after all he was under observation. This was no mere civilian's joy ride. He affected a concentration upon the scenery. The aeroplane swung slowly back again to the level, and his hand left the side. . . .

They were going up very rapidly now. The world seemed to be rolling in at the edges of a great circle that grew constantly larger. Away to the left were broad spaces of brown sand, and grey rippled and smooth shining water channels, and beyond, the sapphire sea; beneath and to the right were fields, houses, villages, woods, and a distant range of hills that seemed to be coming nearer. The scale was changing and everything was becoming maplike. Cows were little dots now and men scarcely visible. . . . And then suddenly all the scenery seemed to be rushing upwards before Peter's eyes and he had a feeling like the feeling one has in a lift when it starts—a down-borne feeling. He affected indifference, and gave the pilot his ~~whistling~~ profile. Down they swept faster than a luge on the swiftest ice run, until one could see the ditches in the shadows beneath the hedges and cows were plainly

cows again, and then once more they were heeling over and curving round. But Peter had been ready for that this time; he had been telling himself over and over again that he was strapped in. He betrayed no surprise. He was getting more and more exhilarated.

And then they were climbing again and soaring straight out towards the sea. Up went this roaring dragonfly in which Peter was sitting, at a hundred and twenty miles or so per hour, leaving the dwindling land behind.

Up they went and up, until the world seemed nearly all sea and the coast was far away; they mounted at last above a little white cloud puff and then above a haze of clouds, and when Peter looked down he saw at a vast distance below, through a clear gap in that filmy cloud fabric, three ships smaller than any toys. Of the men he could distinguish nothing. How sweet the cold air had become!

And high above the world, in the lonely sky above the cloud fleece, the pilot saw fit to spring a surprise upon Peter.

He was not of the genial and considerate order of teachers; he believed in weeding out duds as swiftly as possible. He had an open mind as to whether this rather over-intelligent-looking beginner might not, under certain circumstances, squeal. So he just tried him and, without a note of preparation, looped the loop with him.

The propeller that span before the eyes of Peter dipped. Peter bowed in accord with it. It dipped more and more steeply, until the machine was almost nose down, until Peter was looking at the sea and the land

as one sits and looks at a wall. He was tilted down and down until he was face downward. And then as abruptly he was tilted up; it was like being in a swing; the note of the engine altered, as if a hand swept up a scale of notes; the sea and the land seemed to fall away below him as though he left them forever, and the blue sky swept down across his field of vision like a curtain; he was, so to speak, on his back now with his legs in the air looking straight at the sky, at nothing but sky, and expecting to recover. For a vast second he waited for the swing to end. This was surely the end of the swing. . . .

Only—most amazingly—he didn't recover! He wanted to say, "Ouch!" He was immensely surprised—too surprised to be frightened. He went over backwards—in an instant—and the sea and the land reappeared above the sky and also came down like curtains, too, and then behold! the aeroplane was driving down and the world was in its place far below.

"The Loop!" whispered Peter, a little dazed, and glanced back at his pilot and smiled. This was no perambulator excursion. "The Loop—first trip!"

The blue eyes seemed a little less hard, the weathered face was smiling faintly.

Then gripped by an irresistible power, Peter found himself going down, down, down almost vertically. The pilot had apparently stopped the engine. . . .

Peter watched the majestic expansion of the landscape as they fell. They had come back over the land. Far away he could see the aerodrome like a scattered collection of little toy huts, and growing bigger and bigger every instant. He sat quite still, for it was all

right—it must be all right. But now they were getting very near the ground, and it was still rushing up to meet them, and pouring outwardly as it rose. A cat now would be visible. . . .

It was all right. The engine picked up with a roar like a score of lions, and the pilot levelled out a hundred feet above the trees. . . .

Then presently they were dropping to the aerodrome again; down until the hedges were plain and the grazing cattle close and distinct; and then, with a sense of infinite regret, Peter perceived that they were back on the turf again and that the flight was over. They danced lightly over the turf. Their rush slowed down. They taxied gently up to the hangar and the engine shuddered and, with a pathetic drop to silence, stopped.

A little stiffly, Peter unbuckled himself and stretched and set himself to clamber to the ground.

His weather-bitten senior nodded to him and smiled faintly. . . . Peter walked towards the mess. It was wonderful—and intensely disappointing in that it was so soon over. There were still great pieces of the afternoon left. . . .

H. G. WELLS—*Joan and Peter.*

THE COLONEL'S CUP

I FELT as if I'd never been on Cockbird's back before; everything around me appeared unreal and disconnected from all my previous experience. As I followed Stephen out of the Paddock in a sort of equestrian trance, I caught sight of his father's face, pale and fixed in its most strenuous expression; his eyes followed his son, on whose departure he was too intent to be able to take in anyone else. We filed through a gate under some trees: "Gentleman George" was standing by the gate; he stared up at me as I passed. "That's the 'oss for my money," was all that he said, but his measured tone somehow brought me to my senses, and I was able to look about me when we got down to the starting place.

But even then I was much more a passenger than a resolute rider with his wits about him to "pinch" a good start. There were seven others. I kept close to Stephen. We lined up uneasily; while the starter (on his dumpy grey cob) was instructing us to keep the red flags on the right and the white flags on the left (which we already knew) I noticed Pomfret (on a well-bred, excitable brown) and Brownrigg (Croplady's bright chestnut looking very compact) already stealing forward on the side furthest from him.

When he said "Go," I went with the others; albeit with no sense of initiative. The galloping hoofs sounded strange. But Cockbird felt strong under me and he flicked over the first fence with level and unbroken stride; he was such a big jumper and so quick over his fences that I had to pull him back after each one in order to keep level with Jerry, who was going his best pace all the way. One of the soldiers (in a top-hat) was making the running with Brownrigg and Pomfret close behind him. At the awkward fifth fence (the one on a bank) Pomfret's horse jumped sideways and blundered as he landed; this caused Pomfret to address him in uncomplimentary language, and at the next obstacle (another awkward one) he ran out to the left, taking one of the soldiers with him. This, to my intense relief, was the last I saw of him. I took it at a place where a hole had been knocked in it in the previous races. The next thing I remember was the brook, which had seemed wide and intimidating when I was on foot and had now attracted a small gathering of spectators. But water jumps are deceptive things and Cockbird shot over this one beautifully: (Stephen told me afterwards that he'd "never seen a horse throw such an enormous leap"). We went on up a long slope of firm pasture-land, and I now became aware of my responsibility; my arms were aching and my fingers were numb and I found it increasingly difficult to avoid taking the lead, for after jumping a couple more fences and crossing a field of light ploughland we soared over a hedge with a big drop and began to go down the other side of the hill. Jerry was out-paced and I was level with Mikado and the

Cavalry soldier who had been cutting out the work. As Stephen dropped behind he said, "Go on, George; you've got 'em stone-cold."

We were now more than three parts of the way round, and there was a sharp turn left-handed where we entered on the last half-mile of the course. I lost several lengths here by taking a wide sweep round the white flag, which Brownrigg almost touched with his left boot. At the next fence the soldier went head over heels, so it was just as well for me that I was a few lengths behind him. He and his horse were still rolling about on the ground when I landed well clear of them. Brownrigg looked round and then went steadily on across a level and rather wet field which compelled me to take my last pull at Cockbird. Getting on to better ground, I remembered Mr. Gaffikin's advice, and let my horse go after him. When I had drawn up to him it was obvious that Cockbird and Mikado were the only ones left in it. I was alone with the formidable Brownrigg. The difference between us was that he was quite self-contained and I was palpitating with excitement.

We were side by side: approaching the fourth fence from the finish he hit his horse and went ahead; this caused Cockbird to quicken his pace and make his first mistake in the race by going too fast at the fence. He hit it hard and pecked badly; Brownrigg, of course, had steadied Mikado for the jump after the quite legitimate little piece of strategy which so nearly caused me to "come unstuck." Nearly, but not quite. For after my arrival at Cockbird's ears his recovery tipped me half-way back again and he cantered on

across the next field with me clinging round his neck. At one moment I was almost in front of his chest. I said to myself, "I *won't* fall off," as I gradually worked my way back into the saddle. My horse was honestly following Mikado, and my fate depended on whether I could get into the saddle before we arrived at the next fence. This I just succeeded in doing, and we got over somehow. I then regained my stirrups and set off in urgent pursuit.

After that really remarkable recovery of mine, life became lyrical, beatified, ecstatic, or anything else you care to call it. To put it tersely, I just galloped past Brownrigg, sailed over the last two fences, and won by ten lengths. Stephen came in a bad third.

Needless to say that Dixon's was the first face I was aware of; his eager look and the way he said, "Well done," were beyond all doubt the quintessence of what my victory meant to me. All else was irrelevant at that moment, even Stephen's unselfish exultation and Mr. Gaffikin's loquacious enthusiasm. As for Cockbird, no words could ever express what we felt about him. He had become the equine equivalent of Divinity.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON—*Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man.*

THE LANTERN-BEARERS

THESE boys congregated every autumn about a certain easterly fisher-village, where they tasted in a high degree the glory of existence. The place was created seemingly on purpose for the diversion of young gentlemen. A street or two of houses, mostly red and many of them tiled; a number of fine trees clustered about the manse and the kirkyard, and turning the chief street into a shady alley; many little gardens more than usually bright with flowers; nets a-drying, and fisher-wives scolding in the backward parts; a smell of fish, a genial smell of seaweed; whiffs of blowing sand at the street-corners; shops with golf-balls and bottled lollipops; another shop with penny pickwicks (that remarkable cigar) and the *London Journal*, dear to me for its startling pictures, and a few novels, dear for their suggestive names; such, as well as memory serves me, were the ingredients of the town. These, you are to conceive posted on a spit between two sandy bays, and sparsely flanked with villas—enough for the boys to lodge in with their subsidiary parents, not enough (not yet enough) to cocknify the scene: a haven in the rocks in front: in front of that, a file of grey islets: to the left, endless links and sand wreaths, a wilderness of hiding-holes, alive with popping rabbits and soaring gulls: to

the right, a range of seaward crags, one rugged brow beyond another; the ruins of a mighty and ancient fortress on the brink of one; coves between—now charmed into sunshine quiet, now whistling with wind and clamorous with bursting surges; the dens and sheltered hollows redolent of thyme and southernwood, the air at the cliff's edge brisk and clean and pungent of the sea—in front of all, the Bass Rock, tilted seaward like a doubtful bather, the surf ringing it with white, the solan-geese hanging round its summit like a great and glittering smoke. This choice piece of seaboard was sacred, besides, to the wrecker; and the Bass, in the eye of fancy, still flew the colours of King James; and in the ear of fancy the arches of Tantallon still rang with horse-shoe iron, and echoed to the commands of Bell-the-Cat.

There was nothing to mar your days, if you were a boy summering in that part, but the embarrassment of pleasure. You might golf if you wanted; but I seem to have been better employed. You might secrete yourself in the Lady's Walk, a certain sunless dingle of elders, all mossed over by the damp as green as grass, and dotted here and there by the stream-side with roofless walls, the cold homes of anchorites. To fit themselves for life, and with a special eye to acquire the art of smoking, it was even common for the boys to harbour there; and you might have seen a single penny pickwick, honestly shared in lengths with a blunt knife, bestrew the glen with these apprentices. Again, you might join our fishing parties, where we sat perched as thick as solan-geese, a covey of little anglers, boy and girl, angling over each other's heads, to the much entanglement of

Place and loss of nodding and consequent of stillness before.

regarded as a dainty for the table; and it was a point of honour that a boy should eat all that he had taken. Or again, you might climb the Law, where the whale's jaw-bone stood landmark in the buzzing wind, and behold the face of many counties, and the smoke and spires of many towns, and the sails of distant ships. You might bathe, now in the flaws of fine weather, that we pathetically call our summer, now in a gale of wind, with the sand scourging your bare hide, your clothes thrashing abroad from underneath their guardian stone, the froth of the great breakers casting you headlong ere it had drowned your knees. Or you might explore the tidal rocks, above all in the ebb of springs, when the very roots of the hills were for the nonce discovered; following my leader from one group to another, groping in slippery tangle for the wreck of ships, wading in pools after the abominable creatures of the sea, and ever with an eye cast backward on the march of the tide and the menaced line of your retreat. And then you might go Crusoeing, a word that covers all extempore eating in the open air: digging perhaps a house under the margin of the links, kindling a fire of the sea-ware, and cooking apples there—if they were truly apples, for I sometimes suppose the merchant must have played us off with some inferior and quite local fruit, capable of resolving, in the neighbourhood of fire, into mere sand and smoke and iodine; or perhaps pushing to Tantalion, you might lunch on sandwiches and visions in the grassy court,

was a pair of very excellent eyes on each side of the lane from this remarkable appearance. The object with a more distant sentiment, comprehended the art of the and exhibition, the art of equitation, the art of the ing squalls, soaring above the sea; the sea was the reefed ketches standing for the harbor, each where danger lay, for it was hard to make up the wind any east in the the wind observed with blowing clouds at the pier-head, where all fire was against them; they might see boat and husband and some their whole wealth and their whole family—engulfed under their eyes; and (what I saw but once) a troop of neighbours forcing such an unfortunate homeward, and the squalling and battling in their midst, a figure scarcely human, a tragic Maniad.

These are things that I recall with interest, but what my memory dwells upon the most, I have been all this while withholding. It was a sport peculiar to the place, and indeed to a week or so of our two months' holiday there. Maybe it still flourishes in its native spot; for boys and their pastimes are swayed by periodic forces inscrutable to man; so that tops and marbles reappear in their due season, regular like the sun and moon; and the harmless art of knucklebones has seen the fall of the Roman empire and the rise of the United States. It may still flourish in its native spot, but nowhere else, I am persuaded; for I tried myself to introduce it on Tweedside, and was defeated lamentably; its charm being quite local, like a country wine that cannot be exported.

The idle manner of it was this: . . .

Toward the end of Septem sci

while the wind hummed in the crumbling turrets; or clambering along the coast, eat geans¹ (the worst, I must suppose, in Christendom) from an adventurous gean tree that had taken root under a cliff, where it was shaken with an ague of east wind, and silvered after gales with salt, and grew so foreign among its bleak surroundings that to eat of its produce was an adventure in itself.

There are mingled some dismal memories with so many that were joyous. Of the fisher-wife, for instance, who had cut her throat at Canty Bay; and of how I ran with the other children to the top of the Quadrant, and beheld a posse of silent people escorting a cart, and on the cart, bound in a chair, her throat bandaged, and the bandage all bloody—horror!—the fisher-wife herself, who continued thenceforth to hag-ride my thoughts, and even to-day (as I recall the scene) darkens daylight. She was lodged in the little old jail in the chief street; but whether or no she died there, with a wise terror of the worst, I never inquired. She had been tipping; it was but a dingy tragedy; and it seems strange and hard that, after all these years, the poor crazy sinner should be still pilloried on her cart in the scrap-book of my memory. Nor shall I readily forget a certain house in the Quadrant where a visitor died, and a dark old woman continued to dwell alone with the dead body; nor how this old woman conceived a hatred to myself and one of my cousins, and in the dread hour of the dusk, as we were clambering on the garden-walls, opened a window in that house of mortality and cursed us in a shrill voice and with a marrowy choice of language. It

¹ Wild cherries.

was a pair of very colourless urchins that fled down the lane from this remarkable experience! But I recall with a more doubtful sentiment, compounded out of fear and exultation, the coil of equinoctial tempests; trumpeting squalls, scouring flaws of rain; the boats with their reefed lugsails scudding for the harbour mouth, where danger lay, for it was hard to make when the wind had any east in it; the wives clustered with blowing shawls at the pier-head, where (if fate was against them) they might see boat and husband and sons—their whole wealth and their whole family—engulfed under their eyes; and (what I saw but once) a troop of neighbours forcing such an unfortunate homeward, and she squalling and battling in their midst, a figure scarcely human, a tragic Mænad.

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The idle manner of it was this:

Toward the end of September, when school-time was

drawing near and the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. The thing was so well known that it had worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain; and the grocers, about the due time, began to garnish their windows with our particular brand of luminary. We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and over them, such was the rigour of the game, a buttoned top-coat. They smelled noisomely of blistered tin; they never burned aright, though they would always burn our fingers; their use was naught; the pleasure of them merely fanciful; and yet a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat asked for nothing more. The fishermen used lanterns about their boats, and it was from them, I suppose, that we had got the hint; but theirs were not bull's-eyes, nor did we ever play at being fishermen. The police carried them at their belts, and we had plainly copied them in that; yet we did not pretend to be policemen. Burglars, indeed, we may have had some haunting thoughts of; and we had certainly an eye to past ages when lanterns were more common, and to certain story-books in which we had found them to figure very largely. But take it for all in all, the pleasure of the thing was substantive; and to be a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat was good enough for us.

When two of these asses met, there would be an anxious "Have you got your lantern?" and a gratified "Yes!" That was the shibboleth, and very needful too; for, as it was the rule to keep our glory contained, none could recognize a lantern-bearer, unless (like the polecat) by the smell. Four or five would sometimes climb into

the belly of a ten-man lugger, with nothing but the thwarts above them—for the cabin was usually locked, or choose out some hollow of the links where the wind might whistle overhead. There the coats would be unbuttoned and the bull's-eyes discovered; and in the chequering glimmer, under the huge windy hall of the night, and cheered by a rich steam of toasting tinware, these fortunate young gentlemen would crouch together in the cold sand of the links or on the scaly bilges of the fishing-boat, and delight themselves with inappropriate talk. Woe is me that I may not give some specimens—some of their foresights of life, or deep inquiries into the rudiments of man and nature, these were so fiery and so innocent, they were so richly silly, so romantically young. But the talk, at any rate, was but a condiment; and these gatherings themselves only accidents in the career of the lantern-bearer. The essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide shut, the top-coat buttoned; not a ray escaping, whether to conduct your footsteps or to make your glory public: a mere pillar of darkness in the dark; and all the while, deep down in the privacy of your fool's heart, to know you had a bull's-eye at your belt, and to exult and sing over the knowledge.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON—*Across the Plains.*

SUPERSTITIONS

GOING yesterday to dine with an old acquaintance, I had the misfortune to find his whole family very much dejected. Upon asking him the occasion of it, he told me that his wife had dreamt a strange dream the night before, which they were afraid portended some misfortune to themselves or to their children. At her coming into the room, I observed a settled melancholy in her countenance, which I should have been troubled for had I not heard from whence it proceeded. We were no sooner sat down, but after having looked upon me a little while, "My dear," says she, turning to her husband, "you may now see the stranger that was in the candle last night."

Soon after this, as they began to talk of family affairs, a little boy at the lower end of the table told her that he was going into join-hand on Thursday. "Thursday!" says she. "No, child, if it please God, you shall not begin upon Childermas-day; tell your writing-master that Friday will be soon enough."

I was reflecting with myself on the oddness of her fancy, and wondering that anybody would establish it as a rule to lose a day in every week. In the midst of these my musings, she desired me to reach her a little salt upon the point of my knife, which I did in such a

trepidation and hurry of obedience, that I let it drop by the way, at which she immediately startled, and said it fell towards her. Upon this I looked very blank; and, observing the concern of the whole table, began to consider myself with some confusion, as a person that had brought a disaster upon the family. The lady, however, recovering herself after a little space, said to her husband, with a sigh, "*My dear, misfortunes never come single.*" My friend, I found, acted but an under-part at his table, and, being a man of more good-nature than understanding, thinks himself obliged to fall in with all the passions and humours of his yoke-fellow. "Do not you remember, child," says she, "that the pigeon-house fell the very afternoon that our careless wench spilt the salt upon the table?" "Yes," says he, "my dear, and the next post brought us an account of the battle of Almanza"

The reader may guess at the figure I made after having done all this mischief. I despatched my dinner as soon as I could with my usual taciturnity; when, to my utter confusion, the lady seeing me quitting my knife and fork, and laying them across one another upon my plate, desired me that I would humour her so far as to take them out of that figure and place them side by side. What the absurdity was that I had committed I did not know, but I suppose that there was some traditionary superstition in it; and therefore, in obedience to the lady of the house, I disposed of my knife and fork in two parallel lines, which is the figure I shall always lay them in for the future, though I do not know any reason for it.

It is not difficult for a man to see that a person has

conceived an aversion to him. For my own part, I quickly found, by the lady's looks, that she regarded me as a very odd kind of fellow, with an unfortunate aspect. For which reason I took my leave immediately after dinner, and withdrew to my lodgings.

J. ADDISON—*The Spectator*.

ALEXANDER SELKIRK

UNDER the title of this paper, I do not think it foreign to my design, to speak of a man born in Her Majesty's dominions, and relate an adventure in his life so uncommon, that it is doubtful whether the like has happened to any of human race. The person I speak of is Alexander Selkirk, whose name is familiar to men of curiosity, from the fame of his having lived four years and four months alone in the island of Juan Fernandez. I had the pleasure frequently to converse with the man soon after his arrival in England, in the year 1711. It was matter of great curiosity to hear him, as he is a man of good sense, give an account of the different revolutions in his own mind in that long solitude. When we consider how painful absence from company for the space of but one evening is to the generality of mankind, we may have a sense how painful this necessary and constant solitude was to a man bred a sailor, and ever accustomed to enjoy and suffer, eat, drink, and sleep, and perform all offices of life, in fellowship and company. He was put ashore from a leaky vessel, with the captain of which he had had an irreconcilable difference; and he chose rather to take his fate in this place, than in a crazy vessel, under a disagreeable commander. His portion were a sea-chest,

his wearing clothes and bedding, a firelock, a pound of gunpowder, a large quantity of bullets, a flint and steel, a few pounds of tobacco, an hatchet, a knife, a kettle, a Bible, and other books of devotion, together with pieces that concerned navigation, and his mathematical instruments. Resentment against his officer, who had ill-used him, made him look forward on this change of life, as the more eligible one, till the instant in which he saw the vessel put off; at which moment, his heart yearned within him, and melted at the parting with his comrades and all human society at once. He had in provisions for the sustenance of life but the quantity of two meals, the island abounding only with wild goats, cats and rats. He judged it most probable that he should find more immediate and easy relief, by finding shell-fish on the shore, than seeking game with his gun. He accordingly found great quantities of turtles, whose flesh is extremely delicious, and of which he frequently ate very plentifully on his first arrival, till it grew disagreeable to his stomach, except in jellies. The necessities of hunger and thirst were his greatest diversions from the reflection on his lonely condition. When those appetites were satisfied, the desire of society was as strong a call upon him, and he appeared to himself least necessitous when he wanted everything; for the supports of his body were easily attained, but the eager longings for seeing again the face of man during the interval of craving bodily appetites, were hardly supportable. He grew dejected, languid, and melancholy, scarce able to refrain from doing himself violence, till by degrees, by the force of reason, and frequent reading of the Scriptures, and turning his

thoughts upon the study of navigation, after the space of eighteen months, he grew thoroughly reconciled to his condition. When he had made this conquest, the vigour of his health, disengagement from the world, a constant, cheerful, serene sky and a temperate air made his life one continual feast, and his being much more joyful than it had before been irksome. He now taking delight in everything, made the hut in which he lay, by ornaments which he cut down from a spacious wood, on the side of which it was situated, the most delicious bower, fanned with continental breezes, and gentle aspirations of wind, that made his repose after the chase equal to the most sensual pleasures.

I forgot to observe, that during the time of his dissatisfaction, monsters of the deep, which frequently lay on the shore, added to the terrors of his solitude; the dreadful howlings and voices seemed too terrible to be made for the human ears; but upon the recovery of his temper, he could with pleasure not only hear their voices, but approach the monsters themselves with great intrepidity. He speaks of sea-lions, whose jaws and tails were capable of seizing or breaking the limbs of a man, if he approached them: but at that time his spirits and life were so high, and he could act so regularly and unconcerned, that merely from being unruffled in himself, he killed them with the greatest ease imaginable: for observing, that though their jaws and tails were so terrible, yet the animals being mighty slow in working themselves round, he had nothing to do but place himself exactly opposite to their middle, and as close to them as possible, he dispatched them with his hatchet at will.

The precautions which he took against want, in case of sickness, was to lame kids when very young, so as that they might recover their health, but never be capable of speed. These he had in great numbers about his hut; and when he was himself in full vigour, he could take at full speed the swiftest goat running up a promontory, and never failed of catching them but on a descent.

His habitation was extremely pestered with rats, which gnawed his clothes and feet when sleeping. To defend him against them, he fed and tamed numbers of young kitlings, who lay about his bed, and preserved him from the enemy. When his clothes were quite worn out, he dried and tacked together the skins of goats, with which he clothed himself, and was inured to pass through woods, bushes, and brambles with as much carelessness and precipitance as any other animal. It happened once to him, that running on the summit of a hill, he made to stretch to seize a goat, with which under him, he fell down a precipice, and lay helpless for the space of three days, the length of which time he measured by the moon's growth since his last observation. This manner of life grew so exquisitely pleasant, that he never had a moment heavy upon his hands; his nights were untroubled, and his days joyous, from the practice of temperance and exercise. It was his manner to use stated hours and places for exercises of devotion, which he performed aloud, in order to keep up the faculties of speech, and to utter himself with greater energy.

When I first saw him, I thought, if I had not been let into his character and story, I could have discerned

that he had been much separated from company, from his aspect and gesture; there was a strong but cheerful seriousness in his look, and a certain disregard to the ordinary things about him, as if he had been sunk in thought. When the ship which brought him off the island came in, he received them with the greatest indifference, with relation to the prospect of going off with them, but with great satisfaction in an opportunity to refresh and help them. The man frequently bewailed his return to the world, which could not, he said, with all its enjoyments, restore him to the tranquillity of his solitude. Though I had frequently conversed with him, after a few months' absence he met me in the street, and though he spoke to me, I could not recollect that I had seen him; familiar converse in this town had taken off the loneliness of his aspect, and quite altered the air of his face.

This plain man's story is a memorable example, that he is happiest who confines his wants to natural necessities; and he that goes further in his desires, increases his wants in proportion to his acquisitions; or to use his own expression, "I am now worth £800, but shall never be so happy as when I was not worth a farthing."

RICHARD STEELE—*The Englishman.*

CAPTAIN BROWN

"ELEGANT economy!" How naturally one falls back into the phraseology of Cranford! There, economy was always "elegant," and money-spending always "vulgar and ostentatious"; a sort of sour grapeism which made us very peaceful and satisfied. I never shall forget the dismay felt when a certain Captain Brown came to live at Cranford, and openly spoke about his being poor—not in a whisper to an intimate friend, the doors and windows being previously closed, but in the public et! in a loud military voice! alleging his poverty as reason for not taking a particular house. The ladies of Cranford were already rather moaning over the invasion of their territories by a man and a gentleman. He was a half-pay captain, and had obtained some situation on a neighbouring railroad, which had been vehemently petitioned against by the little town; and if, in addition to his masculine gender, and his connection with the obnoxious railroad, he was so brazen as to talk of being poor—why, then, indeed, he must be sent to Coventry. Death was as true and as common as poverty; yet people never spoke about that loud out in the streets. It was a word not to be mentioned to ears polite. We had tacitly agreed to ignore that any with whom we associated on terms of visiting equality

could ever be prevented by poverty from doing anything that they wished. If we walked to or from a party, it was because the night was so fine, or the air so refreshing, not because sedan-chairs were expensive. If we wore prints, instead of summer silks, it was because we preferred a washing material; and so on, till we blinded ourselves to the vulgar fact that we were, all of us, people of very moderate means. Of course, then, we did not know what to make of a man who could speak of poverty as if it was not a disgrace. Yet, somehow, Captain Brown made himself respected in Cranford, and was called upon, in spite of all resolutions to the contrary. I was surprised to hear his opinions quoted as authority at a visit which I paid to Cranford about a year after he had settled in the town. My own friends had been among the bitterest opponents of any proposal to visit the captain and his daughters, only twelve months before; and now he was even admitted in the tabooed hours before twelve. True, it was to discover the cause of a smoking chimney, before the fire was lighted; but still Captain Brown walked upstairs, nothing daunted, spoke in a voice too large for the room, and joked quite in the way of a tame man about the house. He had been blind to all the small slights and omissions of trivial ceremonies with which he had been received. He had been friendly, though the Cranford ladies had been cool; he had answered small sarcastic compliments in good faith; and with his manly frankness had overpowered all the shrinking which met him as a man who was not ashamed to be poor. And, at last, his excellent masculine common sense, and facility in devising expedients to overcome

dilemmas, had gained him an extraordinary place as authority among the Cranford ladies. He himself went on in his course, as unaware of his popularity as he had been of the reverse; and I am sure he was startled one day when he found his advice so highly esteemed as to make some counsel which he had given in jest to be taken in sober, serious earnest.

It was on this subject: An old lady had an Alderney cow, which she looked upon as a daughter. You could not pay the short quarter of an hour call without being told of the wonderful milk or wonderful intelligence of this animal. The whole town knew and kindly regarded Miss Betsy Barker's Alderney; therefore great was the sympathy and regret when, in an unguarded moment, the poor cow tumbled into a lime-pit. She moaned so loudly that she was soon heard and rescued; but meanwhile the poor beast had lost most of her hair, and came out looking naked, cold, and miserable, in a bare skin. Everybody pitied the animal, though a few could not restrain their smiles at her droll appearance. Miss Betsy Barker absolutely cried with sorrow and dismay; and it was said she thought of trying a bath of oil. This remedy, perhaps, was recommended by some one of the number whose advice she asked; but the proposal, if ever it was made, was knocked on the head by Captain Brown's decided "Get her a flannel waistcoat and flannel drawers, ma'am, if you wish to keep her alive. But my advice is, kill the poor creature at once."

Miss Betsy Barker dried her eyes, and thanked the captain heartily; she set to work, and by and by all the town turned out to see the Alderney meekly going to her pasture, clad in dark grey flannel. I have watched

her myself many a time. Do you ever see cows dressed in grey flannel in London?

Captain Brown had taken a small house on the outskirts of the town, where he lived with his two daughters. He must have been upwards of sixty at the time of the first visit I paid to Cranford after I had left it as a residence. But he had a wiry, well-trained, elastic figure, a stiff military throw-back of his head, and a springing step, which made him appear much younger than he was. His eldest daughter looked almost as old as himself, and betrayed the fact that his real age was more than his apparent age. Miss Brown must have been forty; she had a sickly, pained, careworn expression on her face, and looked as if the gaiety of youth had long faded out of sight. Even when young she must have been plain and hard-featured. Miss Jessie Brown was ten years younger than her sister, and twenty shades prettier. Her face was round and dimpled. Miss Jenkins once said, in a passion against Captain Brown (the cause of which I will tell you presently), "that she thought it was time for Miss Jessie to leave off her dimples, and not always to be trying to look like a child." It was true there was something childlike in her face; and there will be, I think, till she dies, though she should live to a hundred. Her eyes were large blue wondering eyes, looking straight at you; her nose was unformed and snub, and her lips were red and dewy; she wore her hair, too, in little rows of curls, which heightened this appearance. I do not know whether she was pretty or not; but I liked her face, and so did everybody, and I do not think she could help her dimples. She had something of her father's jauntiness of gait

and manner; and any female observer might detect a slight difference in the attire of the two sisters—that of Miss Jessie being about two pounds per annum more expensive than Miss Brown's. Two pounds was a large sum in Captain Brown's annual disbursements.

Such was the impression made upon me by the Brown family when I first saw them all together in Cranford church. The captain I had met before—on the occasion of the smoky chimney, which he had cured by some simple alteration in the flue. In church, he held his double eyeglass to his eyes during the morning hymn, and then lifted up his head erect and sang out loud and joyfully. He made the responses louder than the clerk—an old man with a piping feeble voice, who, I think, felt aggrieved at the captain's sonorous bass, and quavered higher and higher in consequence.

On coming out of church, the brisk captain paid the most gallant attention to his two daughters. He nodded and smiled to his acquaintances; but he shook hands with none until he had helped Miss Brown to unfurl her umbrella, had relieved her of her prayer book, and had waited patiently till she, with trembling nervous hands, had taken up her gown to walk through the wet roads.

I wondered what the Cranford ladies did with Captain Brown at their parties. We had often rejoiced, in former days, that there was no gentleman to be attended to, and to find conversation for, at the card-parties. We had congratulated ourselves upon the snugness of the evenings; and, in our love for gentility, and distaste of mankind, we had almost persuaded ourselves that to be a man was to be "vulgar"; so that when I found my friend and hostess, Miss Jenkyns, was going to have a

party in my honour, and that Captain and the Miss Browns were invited, I wondered much what would be the course of the evening. Card-tables, with green baize tops, were set out by daylight, just as usual; it was the third week in November, so the evenings closed in about four. Candles and clean packs of cards were arranged on each table. The fire was made up; the neat maid-servant had received her last directions; and there we stood, dressed in our best, each with a candle-lighter in our hands, ready to dart at the candles as soon as the first knock came. Parties in Cranford were solemn festivities, making the ladies feel gravely elated as they sat together in their best dresses. As soon as three had arrived, we sat down to "Preference," I being the unlucky fourth. The next four comers were put down immediately to another table; and presently the tea-trays, which I had seen set out in the store-room as I passed in the morning, were placed each on the middle of a card-table. The china was delicate egg-shell; the old-fashioned silver glittered with polishing; but the eatables were of the slightest description. While the trays were yet on the tables, Captain and the Miss Browns came in; and I could see that, somehow or other, the captain was a favourite with all the ladies present. Ruffled brows were smoothed, sharp voices lowered at his approach. Miss Brown looked ill, and depressed almost to gloom. Miss Jessie smiled a usual, and seemed nearly as popular as her father. He immediately and quietly assumed the man's place in the room; attended to every one's wants, lessened the pretty maid-servant's labour by waiting on empty cups and bread-and-butterless ladies; and yet did it all in

so easy and dignified a manner, and so much as if it were a matter of course for the strong to attend to the weak, that he was a true man throughout. He played for threepenny points with as grave an interest as if they had been pounds; and yet, in all his attention to strangers, he had an eye on his suffering daughter—for suffering I was sure she was, though to many eyes she might only appear to be irritable. Miss Jessie could not play cards: but she talked to the sitters-out, who, before her coming, had been rather inclined to be cross. She sang, too, to an old cracked piano, which I think had been a spinet in its youth. Miss Jessie sang "Jock of Hazeldean" a little out of tune; but we were none of us musical, though Miss Jenkyns beat time, out of time, by way of appearing to be so.

It was very good of Miss Jenkyns to do this; for I had seen that, a little before, she had been a good deal annoyed by Miss Jessie Brown's unguarded admission (*à propos* of Shetland wool) that she had an uncle, her mother's brother, who was a shopkeeper in Edinburgh. Miss Jenkyns tried to drown this confession by a terrible cough—for the Honourable Mrs. Jamieson was sitting at the card-table nearest Miss Jessie, and what would she say or think of she found out she was in the same room with a shopkeeper's niece! But Miss Jessie Brown (who had no tact, as we all agreed the next morning) *would* repeat the information, and assure Miss Pole she could easily get her the identical Shetland wool required, "through my uncle, who has the best assortment of Shetland goods of any one in Edinbro'." It was to take the taste of this out of our mouths, and the sound of this out of our ears, that Miss Jenkyns pro-

posed music; so I say again, it was very good of her to beat time to the song.

When the trays reappeared with biscuits and wine, punctually at a quarter to nine, there was conversation, comparing of cards, and talking over tricks; but by and by Captain Brown sported a bit of literature.

"Have you seen any numbers of *The Pickwick Papers*?" said he. (They were then publishing in parts.) "Capital thing!"

Now Miss Jenkyns was daughter of a deceased rector of Cranford; and, on the strength of a number of manuscript sermons, and a pretty good library of divinity, considered herself literary, and looked upon any conversation about books as a challenge to her. So she answered, and said, "Yes, she had seen them; indeed, she might say she had read them."

"And what do you think of them?" exclaimed Captain Brown. "Aren't they famously good?"

So urged, Miss Jenkyns could not but speak.

"I must say, I don't think they are by any means equal to Dr. Johnson. Still, perhaps the author is young. Let him persevere, and who knows what he may become if he will take the great doctor for his model." This was evidently too much for Captain Brown to take placidly; and I saw the words on the tip of his tongue before Miss Jenkyns had finished her sentence.

"It is quite a different sort of thing, my dear madam," he began.

"I am quite aware of that," returned she. "And I make allowances, Captain Brown."

"Just allow me to read you a scene out of this month's

number," pleaded he. "I had it only this morning, and I don't think the company can have read it yet."

"As you please," said she, settling herself with an air of resignation. He read the account of the "swarry" which Sam Weller gave at Bath. Some of us laughed heartily. I did not dare, because I was staying in the house. Miss Jenkyns sat in patient gravity. When it was ended, she turned to me, and said, with mild dignity:

"Fetch me *Rasselas*, my dear, out of the book-room."

When I brought it to her, she turned to Captain Brown:

"Now allow *me* to read you a scene, and then the present company can judge between your favourite, Mr. Boz, and Dr. Johnson."

She read one of the conversations between *Rasselas* and *Imlac*, in a high-pitched, majestic voice; and when she had ended, she said, "I imagine I am now justified in my preference of Dr. Johnson as a writer of fiction." The captain screwed his lips up, and drummed on the table, but he did not speak. She thought she would give a finishing blow or two.

"I consider it vulgar, and below the dignity of literature, to publish in numbers."

"How was the *Rambler* published, ma'am?" asked Captain Brown, in a low voice, which I think Miss Jenkyns could not have heard.

"Dr. Johnson's style is a model for young beginners. My father recommended it to me when I began to write letters—I have formed my own style upon it; I recommend it to your favourite."

"I should be very sorry for him to exchange his style for any such pompous writing," said Captain Brown.

Miss Jenkyns felt this as a personal affront, in a way of which the captain had not dreamed. Epistolary writing she and her friends considered as her *forte*. Many a copy of many a letter have I seen written and corrected on the slate, before she "seized the half-hour just previous to post-time to assure" her friends of this or of that; and Dr. Johnson was, as she said, her model in these compositions. She drew herself up with dignity, and only replied to Captain Brown's last remark by saying, with marked emphasis on every syllable, "I prefer Dr. Johnson to Mr. Boz."

It is said—I won't vouch for the fact—that Captain Brown was heard to say, *sotto voce*, "D——n Dr. Johnson!" If he did, he was penitent afterwards, as he showed by going to stand near Miss Jenkyns's arm-chair, and endeavouring to beguile her into conversation on some more pleasing subject. But she was inexorable. The next day she made the remark I have mentioned about Miss Jessie's dimples.

MRS. GASKELL—*Cranford*

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MRS. GASKELL—*Cranford*

THE STAGE-COACHMAN

IN the course of a December tour in Yorkshire, I rode for a long distance in one of the public coaches, on the day preceding Christmas. The coach was crowded, both inside and out, with passengers, who, by their talk, seemed principally bound to the mansions of relations or friends, to eat the Christmas dinner. It was loaded also with hampers of game, and baskets and boxes of delicacies; and hares hung dangling their long ears about the coachman's box, presents from distant friends for the impending feast. I had three fine rosy-cheeked school-boys for my fellow-passengers inside, full of the buxom health and manly spirit which I have observed in the children of this country. They were returning home for the holidays in high glee, and promising themselves a world of enjoyment. It was delightful to hear the gigantic plans of the little rogues, and the impracticable feats they were to perform during their six weeks' emancipation from the abhorred thraldom of book, birch, and pedagogue. They were full of anticipations of the meeting with the family and household, down to the very cat and dog; and of the joy they were to give their little sisters by the presents with which their pockets were crammed; but the meeting to which they seemed to look forward with the greatest impatience was with Bantam, which I found to be a pony, and according to their talk, possessed of more virtues than any steed since the days

of Bucephalus. How he could trot! how he could run! and then such leaps as he would take—there was not a hedge in the whole country that he could not clear.

They were under the particular guardianship of the coachman, to whom, whenever an opportunity presented, they addressed a host of questions, and pronounced him one of the best fellows in the world. Indeed, I could not but notice the more than ordinary air of bustle and importance of the coachman, who wore his hat a little on one side, and had a large bunch of Christmas greens stuck in the buttonhole of his coat. He is always a personage full of mighty care and business, but he is particularly so during this season, having so many commissions to execute in consequence of the great interchange of presents. And here, perhaps, it may not be unacceptable to my untravelled readers, to have a sketch that may serve as a general representation of this very numerous and important class of functionaries, who have a dress, a manner, a language, an air, peculiar to themselves, and prevalent throughout the fraternity; so that, wherever an English stage-coachman may be seen, he cannot be mistaken for one of any other craft or mystery.

He has commonly a broad, full face, curiously mottled with red, as if the blood had been forced by hard feeding into every vessel of the skin; he is swelled into jolly dimensions by frequent potations of malt liquors, and his bulk is still further increased by a multiplicity of coats, in which he is buried like a cauliflower, the upper one reaching to his heels. He wears a broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat; a huge roll of coloured handkerchief about his neck, knowingly knotted and tucked in at the bosom; and has in summer time a large bouquet of

flowers in his buttonhole; the present, most probably, of some enamoured country lass. His waistcoat is commonly of some bright colour, striped, and his small-clothes extend far below the knees, to meet a pair of jockey-boots which reach about half-way up his legs.

All this costume is maintained with much precision; he has a pride in having his clothes of excellent materials; and, notwithstanding the seeming grossness of his appearance, there is still discernible that neatness and propriety of person which is almost inherent in an Englishman. He enjoys great consequence and consideration along the road, has frequent conferences with the village housewives, who look upon him as a man of great trust and dependence; and he seems to have a good understanding with every bright-eyed country lass. The moment he arrives where the horses are to be changed, he throws down the reins with something of an air, and abandons the cattle to the care of the ostler; his duty being merely to drive from one stage to another. When off the box, his hands are thrust into the pockets of his great coat, and he rolls about the inn yard with an air of the most absolute lordliness. Here he is generally surrounded by an admiring throng of ostlers, stable-boys, shoeblacks, and those nameless hangers-on that infest inns and taverns, and run errands, and do all kinds of odd jobs, for the privilege of battenning on the drippings of the kitchen and the leakage of the taproom. These all look up to him as to an oracle; treasure up his cant phrases; echo his opinions about horses and other topics of jockey lore; and above all, endeavour to imitate his air and carriage. Every ragamuffin that has a coat to his back thrusts his hands in the pockets, rolls in his

ness in every countenance throughout the journey. A stage-coach, however, carries animation always with it, and puts the world in motion as it whirls along. The horn, sounded at the entrance of a village, produces a general bustle. Some hasten forth to meet friends, some with bundles and bandboxes to secure places, and in the hurry of the moment can hardly take leave of the group that accompanies them. In the meantime the coachman has a world of small commissions to execute. Sometimes he delivers a hare or pheasant; sometimes jerks a small parcel or newspaper to the door of a public-house; and sometimes, with a knowing leer and words of sly import, hands to some half-blushing, half-laughing housemaid an odd-shaped billet-doux from some rustic admirer. As the coach rattles through the village, everyone runs to the window, and you have glances on every side of fresh country faces and blooming giggling girls. At the corners are assembled juntos of village idlers and wise men, who take their station there for the important purpose of seeing company pass; but the sagest knot is generally at the blacksmith's, to whom the passing of the coach is an event fruitful of much speculation. The smith, with the horse's heel in his lap, pauses as the vehicle whirls by; the cyclops round the anvil suspend their ringing hammers, and suffer the iron to grow cool; and the sooty spectre in brown paper cap, labouring at the bellows, leans on the handle for a moment, and permits the asthmatic engine to heave a long-drawn sigh, while he glares through the murky

smoke and sulphureous gleams of the smithy.

Perhaps the impending holiday might have given a more than usual animation to the country, for it seemed to me as if everybody was in good looks and good spirits. Game, poultry, and other luxuries of the table, were in brisk circulation in the villages; the grocers', butchers', and fruiterers' shops were thronged with customers. The housewives were stirring briskly about, putting their dwellings in order; and the glossy branches of holly, with their bright red berries, began to appear at the windows. The scene brought to mind an old writer's account of Christmas preparations: "Now capons and hens, besides turkeys, geese, and ducks, with beef and mutton—must all die—for in twelve days a multitude of people will not be fed with a little. Now plums and spice, sugar and honey, square it among pies and broth. Now or never must music be in tune, for the youth must dance and sing to get them a heat, while the aged sit by the fire. The country maid leaves half her market, and must be sent again, if she forgets a pack of cards on Christmas eve. Great is the contention of holly and ivy, whether master or dame wears the breeches. Dice and cards benefit the butler; and if the cook do not lack wit, he will sweetly lick his fingers."

I was roused from this fit of luxurious meditation, by a shout from my little travelling companions. They had been looking out of the coach windows for the last few miles, recognizing every tree and cottage as they approached home, and now there was a general burst of joy—"There's John! and there's old Carlo! and there's Bantam!" cried the happy little rogues, clapping their hands.

At the end of the lane there was an old sober-looking servant in livery, waiting for them; he was accompanied by a superannuated pointer, and by the redoubtable Bantam, a little old rat of a pony, with a shaggy mane and long rusty tail, who stood dozing quietly by the roadside, little dreaming of the bustling times that awaited him.

I was pleased to see the fondness with which the little fellows leaped about the steady old footman, and hugged the pointer; who wriggled his whole body for joy. But Bantam was the great object of interest; all wanted to mount at once, and it was with some difficulty that John arranged that they should ride by turns, and the eldest should ride first.

Off they set at last; one on the pony, with the dog bounding and barking before.

As I looked after them with a feeling in which I do not know whether pleasure or melancholy predominated; for I was reminded of those days when, like them, I had known neither care nor sorrow, and a holiday was the summit of earthly felicity. We stopped a few moments afterwards to water the horses, and on resuming our route, a turn of the road brought us in sight of a neat country seat. I could just distinguish the forms of a lady and two young girls in the portico, and I saw my little comrades, with Bantam, Carlo, and old John, trooping along the carriage road. I leaned out of the coach window, in hopes of witnessing the happy meeting, but a grove of trees shut it from my sight.

In the evening we reached a village where I had deter-

mined to pass the night. As we drove into the great gateway of the inn, I saw on one side the light of a rousing kitchen fire beaming through a window. I entered, and admired, for the hundredth time, that picture of convenience, neatness, and broad, honest enjoyment, the kitchen of an English inn. It was of spacious dimensions, hung round with copper and tin vessels highly polished, and decorated here and there with a Christmas green. Hams, tongues, and flitches of bacon, were suspended from the ceiling; a smoke-jack made its ceaseless clanking beside the fireplace, and a clock ticked in one corner. A well-scoured deal table extended along one side of the kitchen, with a cold round of beef and other hearty viands upon it, over which two foaming tankards of ale seemed mounting guard. Travellers of inferior order were preparing to attack this stout repast, while others sat smoking and gossiping over their ale on two high-backed oaken settles beside the fire. Trim housemaids were hurrying backwards and forwards under the directions of a fresh bustling landlady; but still seizing an occasional moment to exchange a flippant word, and have a rallying laugh with the group round the fire. The scene completely realized Poor Robin's humble idea of the comforts of mid-winter:

Now trees their leafy hats do bare
 To reverence winter's silver hair:
 A handsome hostess, merry host,
 A pot of ale now and a toast,
 Tobacco and a good coal fire,
 Are things this season doth require.¹

¹ Poor Robin's *Almanac*, 1684.

I had not been long at the inn when a post-chaise drove up to the door. A young gentleman stepped out, and by the light of the lamps I caught a glimpse of a countenance which I thought I knew. I moved forward to get a nearer view, when his eye caught mine. I was not mistaken; it was Frank Bracebridge, a sprightly, good-humoured young fellow, with whom I had once travelled on the continent. Our meeting was extremely cordial, for the countenance of an old fellow-traveller always brings up the recollection of a thousand pleasant scenes, odd adventures, and excellent jokes. To discuss all these in a transient interview at an inn was impossible; and finding that I was not pressed for time, and was merely making a tour of observation, he insisted that I should give him a day or two at his father's country seat, to which he was going to pass the holidays, and which lay at a few miles' distance. "It is better than eating a solitary Christmas dinner at an inn," said he, "and I can assure you of a hearty welcome in something of the old-fashioned style." His reasoning was cogent, and I must confess the preparation I had seen for universal festivity and social enjoyment had made me feel a little impatient of my loneliness. I closed, therefore, at once, with his invitation; the chaise drove up to the door, and in a few moments I was on my way to the family mansion of the Bracebridges.

WASHINGTON IRVING—*The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.*

SIR ROGER AT HOME

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing, without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over a hedge and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons; for, as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him: by *this* means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coach-

man has the looks of a privy-councillor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in the grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness, out of regard for his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics, upon my friend's arrival at his country seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good-nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they had often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man, who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years.

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This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependent.

I have observed in several of my papers that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of a humorist, and that his virtues as well as imperfections are, as it were, tinged by a certain extravagance which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned? and without staying for my answer told me that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table, for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a social temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon. My friend, says Sir Roger, found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish, and, because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than

perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or another of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has lived among them. If any dispute arises, they apply themselves to him for the decision: if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series that they follow one another naturally, and made a continued system of practical divinity.

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow (for it was Saturday night), told us the bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw, with a great deal of pleasure, archbishop Tillotson, bishop Saunderson, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced,

that I think I never passed my time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example, and, instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

J. ADDISON—*The Spectator*.

THE TAME DEER

When I passed in pathology my father sent me on a holiday to the Shetland Isles, where I stayed with a doctor.

The doctor was a happy, boyish, dark-haired man of about thirty, married to a serious, orderly, middle-aged woman, whose wisdom and prudence were in contrast with her husband's freedom from care. There were no children. Their house faced the sea, and there was no other dwelling within sight. They had one other guest, a young tweed manufacturer from Jedburgh, and on rainy days the three of us played cards until the doctor's wife, on finding us sitting down to cards after breakfast, removed both packs and declined to produce them until the evening.

One morning the doctor woke me at seven. "Would you like to shoot a deer?" In a second I was out of bed. "You can see it from the window. Yes, in the middle of that third field. It's a hind, and you'll have to stalk her. No, I shouldn't dress. The grass is wet, so put on a pair of shoes. You'll be going down wind, so you'll have to creep all the way. I've got the rifle loaded downstairs."

I went down in pyjamas, and in the hall he handed

me the Martini-Henry rifle. The tweed manufacturer, like the doctor, was up and dressed, and I thought it very kind of them to let me have the shot—but they knew I was a good rifle shot.

It was a long stalk across two fields of hay. I moved on both knees and one hand, holding the heavy rifle in the other. The hay was wet and full of thistles, and the ground was stony. I had to wriggle through a hedge, was scratched by brambles and stung by nettles. These discomforts were of no account, provided the deer was not alarmed. After twenty minutes' crawling I reached the hedge of the field in which the deer was grazing. She was within eighty yards, and by good fortune was standing broadside on. It was an easy shot. I raised my rifle, aimed for below her left shoulder, and pressed the trigger. There was a click. A misfire. The hind pricked her ears, stopped grazing, and looked in my direction. Marvellous hearing these animals have! And what good stalking on my part that she did not know I was there! It was the first time I had stalked a deer. She must be a greedy brute! Otherwise why should she come down from the hills and so near a house in summer, when there was plenty of food in the wilds. Very quietly I opened the breech. There was no cartridge in the rifle. Just like the doctor to forget to load it! Careless fellow! But the deer was undisturbed and I could creep back to the house for a cartridge. If I went as carefully as I had come the deer would stay where she was.

Back I crawled through the fields of soaking hay, and did not rise to my feet until within twenty yards of the house. As soon as I stood up the doctor and his friend

rushed out shouting with insensate laughter. I was very angry.

"It was your fault, you forgot the cartridge!"

"Forgot the cartridge!" shouted the doctor, behaving like a lunatic. "The cartridge! Do you think I should let you shoot my tame deer?"

"A good thing for you and your deer that I hadn't a cartridge in my pocket."

"A cartridge in your pocket! That's why we sent you off in pyjamas."

"Yes," shrieked the tweed merchant, "and his pyjamas are torn."

"And all he needed," spluttered the doctor, "was a lump of sugar!"

"You're a couple of fools," I shouted. Strange how mistaken we can be in our fellow-men. Up to this time I had liked both of them, but now I realized that each had a streak of low vulgarity!

But the more I cursed the more they laughed. The two of them shouted, rocked, and bent themselves with laughter, until the doctor's wife appeared.

"Have you all taken leave of your senses? And on a Sabbath morning, too! There are servants in this house whose

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about in this state? Disgraceful, I call it. Go to your room, sir, and clothe yourself"

HALLIDAY SUTHERLAND—*The Arches of the Years.*

THE THIEVES

As the sun sank, the mother pheasant marshalled her brood of mottled, bright-eyed chicks under her feathers. She appeared very much at peace, for she had safely brought out the whole clutch, eleven of them, after the long days of waiting, and to-day, for the first time, they had pecked lustily about her feet, while the sun shone for them and the softest of dry west breezes fanned the sun-dried grass. Now the sun still shone, falling in golden shafts between the alders and kissing just the top of the sand and shingle mounds about her.

From all appearances her choice of a roosting place was a wise one, for while the brown grass was long enough to cover her brown body, she could see what was coming in all directions. On one side was the wide belt of shingle deposited by the flood waters, sloping down to the stream, with its gurgle of cold waters and its moss-covered stones, already overshadowed by the wood on the opposite side, where the steep bank was green with ferns and sorrel and dotted with the mottled flowers of the mimulus. The old, lichen-covered fence stood between the stream and the big wood, with its shadowy people and its strange night sounds, while on the opposite side of her roosting place was the open common, dotted with yellow whin among the grass

clumps, and here and there a gaunt-limbed pine. Yes, a very lovely place, and the hen pheasant's eyes were bright as now she pecked at an insect on a grass stem, then wriggled lower, tucking a miniature wing or a delicate leg out of sight under her fluffed-out feathers.

As the chicks settled she sank lower and lower, till in the fading light the keenest eye could not have picked her out, and meantime a creeping and rustling came down from the woodland border, the pitter-pat of feet, or moving bodies brushing the fern fronds aside—of many feet and many bodies, but as yet not a moving outline to be seen. Then, as the last red rim of Old Sol disappeared, something did move—a rabbit, long of leg and long of ear, hopping across the stream from one moss-covered stone to the next. How immense he looked in the uncertain light, which made distances deceptive, and landed safely, he shook one hind leg, and the fine spray flashed from it. He sat, goggle-eyed and watchful, for ten seconds or more, and evidently he was the leader, for now other rabbits came hopping across the burn at every crossing place, from stone to stone, all up and down, till every stone held a rabbit, all hopping across, the next landing as the one ahead moved on. For several minutes they presented an almost horrible spectacle, for in place of its stones the stream was dotted with bobbing, moving bunnies, and they were not moving in endless strings when the vanguard was moving across the gravel in a brown wave of confusion. The whole face of the shingle was creeping with rabbits, as though the earth itself were moving, and so for several minutes their numbers poured on. At length the big wood was empty, and the invading army, having found

it, was flooding over the common, streaming into the hollows, and bobbing grotesquely over the mounds. Another ten minutes and not a rabbit was to be seen, and by then the long-legged leader was a mile away, nibbling the lettuces in the keeper's garden.

All this the hen pheasant watched with the fearlessness of familiarity, and as her chicks ceased to wriggle and fell into the fluffy nooks and corners, her back seemed level with the brown level of the grass and the things around her. It was now almost dark, but still she sat and watched, till slowly, imperceptibly, her head sank—steadily down, down, till it rested on the ground, her neck fully extended. For, following at the heels of the rabbit train something had moved out from the wood. It glided noiselessly from stone to stone across the stream, then silently over the rising breast of gravel—no more than a shadow wafted by the night air from shadow to shadow. A cat? No, it was a fox, and he was coming straight towards the hen pheasant and her brood.

Well might the hen pheasant cower down, for if Reynard found her, there would be no chicks left at dawn, and now the blinking of an eye, the raising of a feather would betray them. It seemed for a moment the fox was about to step upon her, but he swerved to avoid the tuft of grass, missing her by inches. Thus he went on into the hazy gloom, for Dame Nature takes good care of her nursing mothers, which at this season have little or no betraying scent.

The pheasant knew now that her choice of a roosting place was unfortunate, for it was dead on the route of the rabbit hordes, where the shady people tread; and

scarcely was the fox gone when there was a rustling and tinkling across the gravel. There appeared a little company of dark, hunched figures; they crossed the stream in Indian file, then, spreading out, proceeded to trickle this way and that, for all the world like clockwork mice on invisible wheels. Within a minute one might have seen a dozen hedgehogs running about the gravel margin, turning this way and that, and nearly, but never quite, colliding. They were hunting the black beetles which, through the glare of the day, had scurried about the gravel, leaving their lace-like impressions everywhere in the dry sand. Now those black beetles were tucked away under the stones, as motionless as the stones themselves, but the hedgehogs were nosing them out and the mother pheasant could hear the "crunch-crunch-crunch" of little sharp fangs.

Her head was still down, but she was watching keenly through the grass stems, for the hedgehogs were quartering every foot of ground, and she did not trust them. One at length came right up to her and would have run over her but that she turned about and dealt him a startling slap with one wing. Instantly there was an immense peeping and struggling under her, but the hedgehog jerked down his visor of prickles and became absolutely still.

For a minute or more the pheasant sat up, hackles on end, staring at him not six inches away, but as he did not move she seemed to become used to his presence, which is the way of mother pheasants. She quietly settled her chicks again, and soon she was dozing off, while the hedgehog remained quite still—so still, indeed, that she might have killed him with that harmless buffet

of her wing. The other hedgehogs continued to gravitate over the gravel bed, till finally they set out across the pasture in the direction the rabbits had gone. Thus there remained only the tinkle of the stream, and the thing which might have been a little mound of earth playing possum alongside the mother pheasant.

She went to sleep at length, if the mothers of the Wild ever sleep at such times; a little silver moon peeped out between the pines, converting the shadowy wood beyond into a jig-saw of deceptive forms and distances, then the hedgehog began to move, if movement it could be termed—slowly, inch by inch to protrude himself in her direction, till his head was half under her. He gave a sudden lurch, quills all on end, which hoisted her bodily over, and in an instant he had one of the chicks—in an instant he had turned about with the chick in his jaws. The others “peeped,” the mother flapped, but seemed unable to realize what had happened, while meantime that hedgehog picked himself up and ran with the quickness of a rabbit out across the gravel, through the stream, and up among the sorrel and the mimulus of the woodland border. He would come back, of course—perhaps several times that night, and the hen pheasant would be lucky if she had two mottled chicks to rub shoulder to shoulder when the dawn broke.

Meantime, strange to relate, she was not unduly disconcerted, for the hour was getting late, and pheasants are not at their best when the moon is bright. She heard the hedgehog scamper back across the stream, and again she settled her chicks, hoping no doubt for the best, though just how it was to come about was not yet evident. Something might happen, of course, for things

are very likely to happen in the early hours of the moon, particularly on the train of the rabbit hordes, and as a matter of fact something began to happen ere the hedgehog was safely up the bank.

That something had heard the minute "peeping" that the other chicks had made when the hedgehog had heaved their mother over, and he was coming down the wood, peering and listening. His hearing was incredibly keen, so keen that he might have heard the squealing of newly born mice a foot underground and sixty feet away. At all events he had heard the pheasant chicks, and this was his line of business. He gained the rotten fence, and there he saw the other thief stealing off with something in its mouth, and the stoat would have stopped the hedgehog but that he knew, or thought he knew, where the rest of the brood was to be found.

In the Wild, as elsewhere, there is a certain honour among thieves, but the definition of theft does not include taking by force or taking by strategy, nor does it include taking when the other fellow is not looking, nor for that matter when he is looking, so long as you are stronger than he is. It is legitimate to take by bluff, or to take in any other way so long as you get it and clear out with a whole skin—in fact, there is only one kind of theft in the Wild, which is when the weak steal from the strong. Conversely, there is only one kind of honour, which is when the weak do not steal from the strong because they dare not, and that, in point of fact, is the only dependable honour among thieves the world over. In other words, the honour of thieves is all "my eye"; in the Wild, as elsewhere, every thief is out for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.

So the hedgehog went on up, and the stoat went on down—down across the stream and across the gravel towards the mother pheasant, who was veritably quivering where she sat for she had smelt the musk smell. He got to within six feet of her, that little bright-eyed, white-fronted killer, then he sat bolt upright, as though to let her see his white front—peering at her over a log, and one might have been pardoned for thinking that he was trying to terrorize her, to fascinate her by his Satanic presence. There he sat, motionless, for a minute or more, then he darted a yard to the right, jerked his black-tipped tail spasmodically, and returned to his original seat. This he did half a dozen times, and how long it might have gone on I do not know. Meantime the hedgehog had evidently hidden his first kill and was returning for a second. He scrambled eagerly across the stream, then scraped over the gravel, and the stoat, turning, saw him not six feet away.

Thus the thieves met, and something now was bound to happen. The stoat flattened and spat phosphorus, while the hedgehog once more jerked down his visor and became absolutely still. The stoat whisked round him a time or two, spitting and cursing at him, but it seemed that things had reached a deadlock, for the hedgehog could wait for hours if the stoat did not go right in and kill the mother pheasant to make sure of his share.

This probably would have happened there and then, but that an interruption occurred. It was Reynard prowling silently back along his old tracks. He gained the top of the bank, and there he froze, looking down at them, motionless as the hedgehog, and as the pheasant

and as the sandbanks around, but that his forehead bristled.

Greased lightning could not have been quicker than that stoat. He exploded like a barrow-load of lighted crackers, and promptly streaked off to the nearest hole, igniting whizz-bangs all the way. The hedgehog, too, picked himself up and set the clockwork in motion, running in the same direction, if running it could be called—back across the gravel, then across the stream. Somehow the mother pheasant kept her nerve and remained stock still, which, on the whole, was very heroic of her.

The stoat found the nearest hole and hit it, as a stoat always does—a little cave, perhaps two feet deep, which the rabbits had hollowed out between two rocks as a daytime seat. The stoat whisked in and faced about, but the hedgehog was a good forty feet behind him, and did not know that the stoat was there. It was unfortunate that he, too, should have hit that hole, but he had no time to waste, because the fox was at his very heels and the click-click-click of pearly fangs veritably brushed his tail-end spikes. Not that the fox wanted hedgehog—he is not worth it in the days of plenty, but one might as well see him run.

Inside that hole—goodness knows what happened, but

rattlesnake, before Prickles had time to drop his visor. It was a foolish move on the stoat's part, for Prickles curled up, quills on end, then proceeded to expand like a child's balloon till he filled the narrow passageway from top to bottom and from side to side. Thus the stoat

was wedged in at the farthest extremity, and it looked as though he might have to stay there for a time, for the hedgehog, at any rate, would not stir again.

The next thing that happened did not improve the deplorable state of affairs immediately underground. The fox sniffed the mouth of the hole, and he had not to sniff twice in order to ascertain just who was inside. He had no use for such trash as hedgehogs and stoats, since they are neither useful nor edible and simply spoil good hunting. So for a minute or so Reynard stood and thought—listening at the mouth of the hole. He turned his head this way and that, his big ears up, and from within strange and muffled noises were issuing—gruntings, chatterings, scratchings, and the sound of bristles grating against the rocks. He might as well leave them to stew in their own juice, so he sat down and proceeded luxuriously to scratch one ear with a hind paw. Meantime the lark awoke, and the wren filled the woodland border with his metallic "chipp-chipp." Overhead sounded the crowing of moor-game, very faint and far; a heron croaked, an owl hooted out, the gods of the night then shrieked at the gods of the dawn. The mother pheasant raised her head and looked, and seeing that the coast was clear she went sneaking off—crouching as she ran, so that one would not have seen her above the seed grass.

How sweet and beautiful the dawn was, but for Reynard it meant bedtime. Still he scratched and pondered, while the noises within the hole became louder, more ominous. Then an idea occurred to him, and he began to scratch—daintily with his forepaws, his hind legs braced, his tail arched. Systematically he filled the hole

in, buried it, as he might bury any other unpleasant thing. He scratched it well in and trod it well down, and finally he scooped up a little mound of sand over the place, and planted a stone on the top of the mound as though to commemorate it. Nothing in the Wild would be likely to mourn a stoat and a hedgehog, but the fox may have wanted something to remind him of his little jest. All round he could hear the rabbits coming back, and as the first red rim of the sun peered over the ridge, he sat himself down on the sarcastic little mound and leered the cunningest of leers at the new-born day.

H. MORTIMER—BATTEN.

OLD NOG

OLD NOG the eel stirred uneasily in his home under the big shoulder, where the gnarled roots of the elder tree showed bare through the overhanging bank, and stretched down in twisted nakedness to the bed of the placid stream.

It was a place of quiet retreat, a still, unbroken reach, where the water slid on between an orchard on the one side and a meadow on the other, a shaded way, where the branches of the old apple and plum trees stretched out across the stream to interlace themselves with the elders and small oaks that fringed the meadow bank. Their wavering shadows broke and trembled on the mirror-like surface that flowed gently on over the weed-covered pebbles, and green growth that swayed lazily in the slow current.

Behind the orchard lay the cottage of the farm labourer, and near it various unsightly objects strewn the river-bed; old pot-sherds, tin cans, a quantity of waterlogged sacking, and a discarded umbrella that rested grotesquely in mid-stream, spreading its derelict ribs over the shallows of a miniature gravel bank.

Old Nog had stirred because the clear water that flowed imperceptibly by him in his dark home was suddenly replaced by a turbid swirl that came rolling in,

covering him with a fine silt as he lay in a loose curve on the sandy bottom. This was a daily occurrence, for some two miles up the valley was a mill pond, and, preparatory to working his mill, the miller closed the outlet so that while the pond was filling the stream was fed only by such water as escaped through the imperfect sluice. The outflow sufficed to maintain the river in a clear, if shallow, state, but when the sluice was opened its course was changed into a chattering turbid torrent, that hurried along, obscuring the bottom, and

re tiny
al flow.

At his arrival they flashed away like bars of burnished silver, and the force of the current carried him in undignified haste against the broken umbrella, where he lay, sulkily thrusting his long head with its little un-

folds.
of the same
ie pebbles of

the stream. On his back was a pale patch, an old scar

venturous existence.

Ten years ago he had come from the sea into the tidal creek where he began to make his way up the stream. He haunted the muddy shallows in company with restless little shrimps and tiny flatfish no bigger than a shilling piece, himself a fragile little creature scarcely two inches in length, with his viscera plainly distinguishable through his glass-like body, and his eyes

like two little black specks in his pale head.

Nourishment was plentiful in the creek, where every organism that might form fish food thrived in the unpolluted water; it was no less abundant in the clear stream that flowed into the little estuary, and by the time Old Nog had established himself in his retreat in the orchard, he had become a strong and well-grown member of his kind.

He had lain now some minutes on the gravel bank, motionless, except for the slow opening and closing of his gill covers, that swelled and subsided as though he were perpetually swallowing, when suddenly he nosed forward and slid gradually out of the folds of the old umbrella, like a sword withdrawn gently from its sheath. Making his way along the bottom, where he moved easily against the stream as though impelled by some subtle undercurrent, he directed himself towards his home under the elder roots. There was something strangely flaccid and weak-looking about the three feet of lithe muscle as it drifted off towards the bank, but the least alarm would have rendered it rigid and strong as a steel spring, and rapid wriggling strokes of his tail would have shot the big eel through the water at a pace that many a fish would have envied.

Just as Old Nog was about to turn in under the big boulder there was a little "plop" in an eddy by the elder roots, as a tiny creature fell in the water where it struggled madly. Looking up he perceived a little frog moving his limbs in a quick breast-stroke, looking like some little dwarf an inch long, swimming for dear life to regain the bank, whence a rash and silly jump had precipitated him.

The big eel rose, lifting himself laboriously in the water, and straightening out towards the tiny frog like a slanting ribbon in the turbid flow. His was not the greedy snap of the gluttonous trout, he advanced his long head and seized his victim with deliberation, fixing his teeth in the soft body and swallowing it calmly, as he sank back to draw himself slowly, tail first, under the boulder, where he disturbed a big black trout, who flounced out and darted like an arrow under the opposite bank.

Towards noon the milling ceased, the flow diminished, and the water was again sparkling clear in the summer sun. Old Nog was coiled snugly in the mud and gravel of the innermost recesses under the boulder. There was hardly enough water to cover him, but he did not mind that, he could have lived hours out of the water altogether, and was capable of supporting an existence of months in the ooze of the shallows under the banks.

Down the stream there was a great hubbub. A party of schoolboys were splashing about, overturning stones in quest of elvers and young trout, and thrusting their arms deep under the banks in eager search of bigger fish. They were an experienced lot, old hands at the gentle art of "tickling" trout, and versed in the ways and habits of all the creatures of the stream. One of them carried a glass jar, where some of their captures could be seen darting convulsively round their prison, another an old shrimping net, while two brought up the rear laden with the boots and clothes of their comrades, who paddled at ease in the clear water.

The leader slowly made his way up-stream, per-

severingly overturning the stones, and flinging himself down on the grass to grope with his hands for the trout that lurked under the banks. When he was so occupied his companions watched him anxiously, if he moved his arms with careless movements they became impatient and indifferent, but if he grew suddenly tense and speechless they knew his lithe fingers were feeling caressingly round the smooth body of a trout, and craned forward to await the moment when he wriggled back, and brought his hands slowly from the water, holding his gleaming quarry.

Just when the party entered the orchard he felt carefully under the bank, and encountered the big trout that had been driven from the boulders by Old Nog. He rarely failed with a fish in such shallow water, but the size of his victim so astonished him that his fingers trembled with eagerness, and he gave a feverish grasp instead of the steady strain that would have secured the prize. The big trout slipped from his fingers and dashed up-stream, where after floundering madly on a sand-heap, he wriggled off and darted under the opposite bank.

The boy crossed the stream and leaned over to try his luck again. He had been groping with silent concentration for some minutes, when he gave a cry and withdrawing his fingers, fell to sucking them anxiously. The others crowded round to learn what had happened.

"It's all right," he said stoutly, displaying the tip of a bleeding finger, where two little teeth-marks were plainly visible, "there's a water-rat's hole under the bank. I'll not try him again with my hands, give me that stick, Joe."

Then ensued much jabbing and prodding in the hole, but the rat and his companion were proof against all efforts to dislodge them, and the boys turned to the boulders below.

One of them recollected that big eels were seen in the orchard on the days when the farm-labourer's wife cleaned pilchards in a pool, just where the stream started its course under the trees. The eels were said to haunt the recesses under the boulders, where they returned when they had satiated themselves with the pilchard offal that was thrown in.

Nothing discomfited, the leader of the party bade the others hold his feet, and stretched down over a boulder, for in that posture he considered he could best negotiate the muddy depths under the great stone. Suddenly his groping arm encountered a slippery body that withdrew quickly, and something like an invisible hand seized him firmly by the fingers, imparting a painful pressure which it immediately released. He gave a start that almost jerked his feet from his companions' grasp, and bade them haul him back, which they did, not without sallies at his expense over his late experience with the rat.

"That was an eel, and a big one too, we'll soon have him out," he said, and jumped down into the stream, where he seized the stick they offered, and began to prod energetically under the boulder. The rest watched eagerly, craning over the edge. Little clouds of mud eddied out and drifted away, and at length they were rewarded by the sight of the big head of Old Nog, which swayed forward just beyond the rim of the boulder, the picture of sulky disgust and astonishment.

Their excitement knew no bounds, they had never seen so large an eel, the capture of a big elver was an event that marked a red-letter day in the calendar of their humble fishing, and the prize under the boulder was of such proportions as dwarfed those of many a conger they had seen brought in by the fishermen of the coves.

Old Nog slowly withdrew, and they inserted the stick behind him, in the hope of forcing him out into the middle of the stream, but he defeated their efforts by a strong stroke of his tail, that sent him in. A steady swirl of mud that poured out from under the boulder, announced that he was pushing his way far into the ooze and sand.

Once coiled snugly he resisted all attempts to dislodge him, until a particularly vicious jab of the stick struck fair and square in his gleaming folds, and drove him out to the edge of the rocks.

This time he upset all the calculations of his pursuers by sliding out into the middle of the stream, where he took refuge, partially concealed, under a rotting branch that had fallen into the water. A pair of eager hands were stretched out towards him, trembling fingers crept round his coils and tightened, but he eluded their grasp like quick-silver, and darted across to the opposite bank.

The shallows there afforded no shelter, and in a minute he was out again, heading down the stream with a deliberation that showed he was bent on picking his own way, not darting willy-nilly like the frightened trout that blundered against the stones, or buried themselves blindly in the thick masses of weed which

flattered out on the shallow bottom.

A shout arose from the party on the bank, and all joined in the chase, splashing down-stream, tripping, stumbling, overturning stones, scrambling madly in their eager haste to head him off. The glass jar was thrown aside, the old shrimp-net hopelessly rent on the jagged stones, and a large pail was requisitioned from a cottager who lived down the stream. Old Nog made a halt under a pile of weed, and with a caution born of long experience they placed the lip of the pail in front of his head, and gently manoeuvring his tail, endeavoured to drive him in. He shrank back, raising himself in the weed, and retracting in an S-shaped curve, as though touched by an electric shock, then nosing past the pail he glided off, and the chase began again. But the water was getting shallower, and he soon came to rest in another heap of weed, where his pursuers again introduced the bucket, and repeated their attempts to secure him. There was a moment of tense excitement as his head entered the pail, and in response to gentle pinching of the tail he swam slowly in. With a shout the leader of the party swung up the pail, and then waded towards the bank, where his comrades stretched out eager hands. But they had reckoned without Old Nog, who heaved himself up, and slid quickly over the side, with a disdainful flick of the tail that made the boy lose his hold on the bucket, so that it fell with a splash and clatter. It landed on top of the eel, who wriggled frantically down the stream.

Below the orchard the water flowed in a broad reach over sandy shallows, and in narrow channels between stretches of small mud-flats, where it would go hard

with the big eel if his pursuers heaped up the gravel and cut him off from the stream, hemmed in with banks of sand that would put him at their mercy in shallow pools. The boys realized the position, and with shouts chased him towards the bank, where they ran ahead, and began feverishly piling up the wet sand to form a barrier between him and the deeper parts of the stream. Already he was floundering madly, with his gleaming folds exposed above the water, and his enemies were triumphantly advancing, when a turbid swirl came rolling down, eddying round their ankles and rising rapidly. In a moment the chattering torrent of the millstream swept down upon them, washing away the barriers they had made, and flooding the shallow mud-flats with its tempestuous swirl. Old Nog was saved, and his foes had the chagrin of seeing him advancing steadily up-stream in the now deep water, as though he were resolved on re-establishing himself in his old home under the boulders.

It was about a week after this episode that the cottager's wife cleaned pilchards in the stream. Before her was a large basket of fish that she gutted leisurely, sitting on a low stool over a clear pool scooped deep and wide in the gravel. Her ten-years-old son was busily engaged with some lengths of line to which he was carefully fastening a trout hook. He raked on one side the pilchards' gut that had settled in the pool, baited his hook with a piece, and flung it out to let it sink on the gravelly bottom. Then he sat down to await developments.

A casual glance would have disclosed little sign of life in the clear stream, the water was low, one or two

idle little trout were swimming lazily against the slow current, and a cloud of gnats were dancing with half-hearted animation under the mildewy apple branches. But on looking carefully under the banks and rocks down the stream, triangular heads would have been observed, dark above and whitish-grey below, raised and swaying uneasily as they snuffed eagerly the oil from the pilchard offal that was carried down to them from the pool. Pectoral fins winnowed gently, and presently the heads emerged, disclosing eels of all sizes, who coiled into the middle of the stream, and began to ascend it by all the devious routes imaginable. Elvers less than a foot in length squirmed on in company with bigger eels, and disturbed trout darted hither and thither as the serpent-like forms nosed under banks and stones in their roundabout progress. Sometimes the water was so shallow that they wriggled over obstacles, and now and then a tiny splash announced the sharp flick of the tail of some eel as he cleared a bank of small stones and gravel. All pressed steadily on making their way to the clearer reach of water that lay just above the orchard.

The boy sat motionless, staring into the stream; when the first audacious elver came nosing into the pool he took a stick and gave him a jab that sent him flashing away. He had no wish to waste his bait on such insignificant fry, but he started with excitement when he saw a huge eel, with a pale patch on his back, making his way up the stream. Old Nog was hungry, he had outstripped the other big eels in the race to the pool, and only when he saw the shadows of the woman and the boy striking across the water did he regain his usual

caution and come on at a less hurried pace. He entered the pool and swam slowly towards the bait, which he seized greedily, and began to swallow it in haste.

The boy let him have his way, and when he considered he had sucked down enough he began to pull steadily on the line. But Old Nog was not to be caught so easily, a big shred of bait and the hook were tugged from his mouth, and he drew back with all his suspicions aroused, staring doubtfully at his escaped dinner, and deliberating whether he should make for it again. Hunger decided him, and gingerly taking the fringe of the gut he threw caution to the winds, and fastened greedily on the bait.

This time the boy was wise, he let him have his fill, and when the eel began to retire from the pool, swimming slowly backwards, he paid out his line and let it go with him. The result was that Old Nog thoroughly swallowed bait, hook, and a good length of catgut, so that when his progress was brought up short by the tightening of the line he was drawn slowly but surely towards the bank. It was then that some apprehension of the danger broke in upon his brain, and he started a series of herculean wriggles that threatened to break the line. This so alarmed the boy that he braced himself, and gave a strong jerk. There was a swish as a swiftly wriggling body burst from the water, came flashing through the air, and fell high and dry on the grassy bank.

Old Nog exerted himself mightily and broke the line, then he wriggled desperately in the grass, slipping through the hands of his would-be captor till the boy gave him a flip that tumbled him into a dusty hollow.

The big eel was coated with dust that stuck to his slime, and afforded the enemy a hold. Grasping firmly the straining muscular folds the boy raised him in the air and turned to bear him away. But Old Nog writhed round and bit his tormentor sharply on the wrist. That was the end of the struggle. With a shriek and a spasmodic jerk the boy flung him wildly into the stream, where he careered down through the orchard with all the speed the shallows allowed him.

When the autumn came on and flood-waters swelled the river Old Nog

ness and a desire
instinct of the eel

down towards the sea to spawn; even as far away as the sluggish mill leet they were stirring, especially during thundery weather, and the long and slow procession passed down till the winter months. The eels of the lonely moorland pools, treacherous boggy pits whose brown water was covered with broad-leaved lilies, felt the urge as well as their brethren of the stream, and left their homes travelling by the tiny rills that wound away over the moors until they reached the river.

One dark night the big eel glided from the boulders and swam slowly down the stream. He chose to hug the banks, for the current was running swift and full in the middle of the river, and all kinds of rubbish were sweeping down upon the feeding fish.

At the end of the orchard he swam round a sandy shallow, and found himself opposite a little weed-choked channel, through which clear and cold water filtered into the stream, spreading a freshening and invigorating influence round a miniature bay.

Old Nog snuffed the cold water and coiled to the mouth of the channel, where he nosed in amongst the weed and decided to swim up and investigate. Worming his way up, he suddenly came to what appeared to him a small but deep pool, cooled by a spring of fresh water that welled up from the bottom. He swam down and around, to discover he was in a prison, having in fact entered a well about three feet deep, fed by a spring whose overflow oozed down through the channel he had just ascended. He made the tour of the bottom and slipped into a crevice in the rough stone wall. The crack widened out into a recess, dark and cool, where he lay curled so snug and comfortable that he decided to make the place his new home.

He lived there in serene quietude and indifference to the agitation that broke the quiet surface of the well, when buckets and pitchers were lowered into it many times a day, and he might have gone on indefinitely in his untroubled existence, had he not incautiously shown himself to the school children who came to drink at the well. Thenceforward tempting morsels, dropped in secret, sank to the bottom and fouled the water, to the general indignation of the neighbours. Whether or not the eel took these offerings of bits of cake, bread, and meat, they disappeared.

The schoolmaster was informed, and the facts became known to a young farmer who lived near. One afternoon he went to the well with a large bucket and industriously baled out the water. A poking stick brought Old Nog grudgingly from the hole in the wall, and he was scooped up in an undignified manner, to be flung on the broad sandy road that ran along by the

river. It was the time of afternoon recreation, and a crowd of curious boys had gathered round to watch the baling operation. Old Nog was quickly secured and handed over as a special privilege to the schoolmaster's son, an ardent boy naturalist, who took him home in a deep pitcher, and transferred him to a large bath where he proudly exhibited him to all his friends.

Old Nog languished there three days. His captor put a layer of mud and gravel in the bottom of the bath, and introduced some big stones from the river; he changed the water, too, with unfailing regularity, but the sick eel showed no animation. He lay in a limp curve among the stones, hardly breathing; until he became pale and unhealthily marbled in the stagnant water—his long ribbon-like fin drooped on his back, and he was so weak that he heeled over displaying his silvery underside.

At the end of the third day the boy realized that all his efforts to keep him would be unavailing. It was bitter to part with him, but his heart triumphed over his inclination, and, just when the cold winter sun was setting, he and a companion sorrowfully carried the bath to the river-side.

In a shallow below the bridge they gently emptied the bath, and the big eel slid out and drifted helplessly into the stream where he lay on his side. They righted him, and supported his feeble length with a little bank of stones and gravel, then sat down on the grass to see whether he would recover in the running water. A long time they sat there till the twilight began to fall, when, to their delight, Old Nog began to wriggle feebly, and edge from the shallow. Half drifting, half

swimming, he was carried slowly into the strong flow of the river, where he seemed to feel something of the invigorating and bracing effect of the swirling water. With a sudden turn he headed down the stream, swimming on with ever-quickenings strokes that carried him to the shadow of the overhanging bramble brake, where he was soon lost to the view of the anxious watchers on the bank.

F. V. DEMPSTER—*By Seashore, Wood and Moorland.*



THE TALE OF THE BEAVER PEOPLE

It is generally conceded that the beaver was by far the most interesting and intelligent of all the creatures that at one time abounded in the vast wilderness of forest, plain and mountain that was Canada before the coming of the white man.

Although in the north they are now reduced to a few individuals and small families scattered thinly in certain inaccessible districts, there has been established for many years, a game reserve of about three thousand square miles, where these and all other animals indigenous to the region are as numerous as they were

fifty years ago. I refer to the Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario. This game sanctuary is guarded in the strictest manner by a very competent staff of Rangers, and it is a saying in the region that it would be easier to get away with murder than to escape the consequences of killing a beaver in their patrol area.

This little worker of the Wild has been much honoured. He ranks with the maple leaf as representative of the Dominion, and has won a place as one of Canada's national emblems, by the example he gives of industry, adaptability, and dogged perseverance; attributes well worthy of emulation by those who undertake to wrest a living from the untamed soil of a new country. He is the Imperialist of the animal world. He maintains a home and hearth, and from it he sends out every year a pair of emigrants who search far and wide for new fields to conquer; who explore, discover, occupy, and improve, to the benefit of all concerned.

The Indian, who lived by the killing of animals, held his hand when it came to the beaver. Bloody wars were waged on his behalf by his red-skinned protectors, until the improvements of civilization raised economic difficulties only to be met by the sale of beaver skins, with starvation as the alternative.

The red men considered them as themselves and dignified their Little Talking Brothers with the name of The Beaver People, and even in these degenerate days of traders, whiskey, and lost tradition, there are yet old men amongst the nations who will not sit to a table where beaver meat is served, while those who now eat him and sell his hide will allow no dog to eat his

bones, and the remains, feet, tails, bones and entrails, are carefully committed to the element from which they came, the water.

It would seem that by evolution or some other process, these creatures have developed a degree of mental ability superior to that of any other living animal, with the possible exception of the elephant.

Most animals blindly follow an instinct and a set of habits, and react without mental effort to certain inhibitions and desires. In the case of the beaver, these purely animal attributes are supplemented by a sagacity which so resembles the workings of the human mind that it is quite generally believed, by those who know most about them, that they are endowed to a certain extent with reasoning powers. The fact that they build dams and houses, and collect food is sometimes quoted as evidence of this; but muskrats also erect cabins and store food in much the same manner. Yet where do you find any other creature but man who can fall a tree in a desired direction, selecting only those which can conveniently be brought to the ground? For rarely do we find trees lodged or hung up by full-grown beaver; the smaller ones are responsible for most of the lodged trees. Instinct causes them to build their dams in the form of an arc, but by what means do they gain the knowledge that causes them to arrange that curve in a concave or a convex formation, according to the water-pressure?

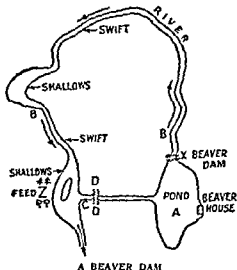
Some tame beaver objected strongly to the window in my winter camp, and were everlastingly endeavouring to push up to it articles of all kinds, evidently thinking it was an opening, which it is their nature to

close up. That was to be expected. But they overstepped the bounds of natural impulse, and entered the realm of calculation, when they dragged firewood over, and piled it under the window until they had reached its level, and on this improvised scaffold they eventually accomplished their purpose, completely covering the window with piled-up bedding. Whenever the door was open they tried every means of barricading the opening, but found they could never get the aperture filled. One day I returned with a pail of water in each hand to find the door closed, having to set down my pails to open it. I went in, and my curiosity aroused, watched the performance. As soon as I was clear, one of the beaver started to push on some sack- ing he had collected at the foot of the door, and slowly but surely closed it. And this he often did from then on. Instinct? Maybe.

Their general system of working is similar in most cases, and the methods used are the same. However, in the bush no two places are alike, and it requires no little ingenuity on the part of a man to adapt himself to the varying circumstances, yet the beaver can adjust himself to a multiplicity of different conditions, and is able to overcome all the difficulties arising, meeting his problems much in the way a man would.

In the accompanying sketch will be seen a lake A, representing a pond well known to me on which there was a beaver family. There was much feed at the place marked Z on the farther bank of the river B, but none on the lake, which had been very shallow, but was dammed at X. Between the spot on the river marked Z and the lake was a distance of two hundred

yards. The problem was to get the feed across to the pond. The river route was too far, and to draw it such a distance in a country bristling with dangers was not to be considered, so the beaver dug a canal towards the river. Now this stream had run swiftly two miles or more before it reached the point Z, therefore, natur-



ally at that place would be much lower than the level of the lake. On the completion of the canal C the lake would consequently be drained. This the beaver were well aware of, and to avoid this contingency, the channel was dug as far as D, discontinued for a few yards, and continued on to the river, leaving a wall, which being further heightened, prevented the escape of their precious water.

Thus they could float their timber in ease the full distance, with the exception of one short portage. A problem not easily solved.

Their strength is phenomenal and they can draw a stick which, in proportion, a man could not shift with his hands, and to move it sideways they will go to each extremity alternately, poise the end over their head and throw it an appreciable distance. I have seen two small beaver struggling down a runway with a poplar log, heaviest of soft woods, of such a size that only the top of their backs and heads were visible above it.

Shooting them when they are so engaged, a common practice, somehow seems to me in these latter days, like firing from ambush on children at play, or shooting poor harmless labourers at work in the fields.

The beaver is a home-loving beast and will travel far overland, around the shores of lakes and up streams, searching for a suitable place to build. Once settled where there is enough feed, and good opportunities to construct a dam, a family is liable to stay in that immediate district for many years. The young, at the age of two years, leave home, and separating, pick each a mate from another family, build themselves a house and dam, and settle down to house-keeping; staying together for life, a period of perhaps fifteen years. At the end of the third year they attain full growth, being then three feet and a half long with the tail, and weighing about thirty-five pounds. In the spring the mother has her young, the male making a separate house for them and keeping the dam in repair. The last year's kittens leave the pond, going always down-stream, and wander around all summer, return-

ing about August to assist in the work of getting ready for the winter. The first part of these preparations is to build a dam, low to begin with, and being made higher as needed. The main object of this structure is to give a good depth of water, in which feed may be kept all winter without freezing, and heavy green sticks are often piled on top of the raft of supplies, which is generally attached to the house, in order to sink it as much as possible. Also by this means the water is flooded back into the timber they intend to fall, enabling them to work close to the water and

the timber they are the shores of a lake are hardly ever low enough to allow any more than the first narrow fringe of trees close to the water to be drowned, and that is generally of little value commercially.

The immense amount of work that is put into a dam must be seen to be realized. Some of these are eight feet high, a hundred yards long, and six feet through at the base, tapering up to a scant foot at the water level. Pits are dug near the ends from which are carried the materials to prevent seepage, and a judicious admixture of large stones add the necessary stiffening at the water-lines. Canals are channelled out, trees felled near them, neatly limbed, cut up, and all but the heavier portions drawn to the water and floated away. The heightened water facilitates this operation, and besides thus fulfilling his own purpose, the beaver is performing a service for man that, too late, is now being recognized.

Many a useful short-cut on a circuitous canoe route, effecting a saving of hours, and even days, a matter of the greatest importance in the proper policing of the valuable forests against fire, has become impracticable since the beaver were removed, as the dams fell out of repair, and streams became too shallow for navigation by canoes.

The house alone is a monument of concentrated effort. The entrance is under water, and on a foundation raised to the water level, and heightened as the water rises, sticks of every kind are stacked criss-cross in a dome-shaped pile, some eight feet high and from ten to twenty-five feet in width at the base. These materials are placed without regard to interior accommodation, the interstices filled with soil, and the centre is cut out from the inside, all hands chewing away at the interlaced sticks until there is room enough in the interior for a space around the waterhole for a feeding place, and for a platform near the walls for sleeping quarters. The beds are made of long shavings, thin as paper, which they tear off sticks; each beaver has his bed and keeps his place.

Pieces of feed are cut off the raft outside under the ice, and peeled in the house, the discarded sticks being carried out through a branch in the main entrance, as are the beds on becoming too soggy. Should the water sink below the level of the feeding place the loss is at once detected, and the dam inspected and repaired. Thus they are easy to catch by making a small break in the dam and setting a trap in the aperture. On discovering the break they will immediately set to work to repair it without loss of time, and get into the trap.

When it closes on them they jump at once into deep water and, a large stone having been attached to the trap, they stay there and drown, taking about twenty minutes to die; a poor reward for a lifetime of useful industry.

Late in the Fall the house is well plastered with mud, and it is by observing the time of this operation that it is possible to forecast the near approach of the freeze-up.

And it is the contemplation of this diligence and perseverance, this courageous surmounting of all difficulties at no matter what cost in labour, that has, with other considerations, earned the beaver, as far as I am concerned, immunity for all time. I cannot see that my vaunted superiority as a man entitles me to disregard the lesson that he teaches, and profiting thereby, I do not feel that I have any longer the right to destroy the worker or his works performed with such devotion.

GREY OWL— *The Men of the Last Frontier.*

THE CUCKOO

MOST people know that the "cuckoo lays its eggs in another bird's nest."

The few will say that the cuckoo does nothing of the sort, that she will lay her egg on the ground somewhere, and then carry it either by beak or foot to the selected nest, deposit it there, and fly away. They will say (once I said the same thing) that "it never actually lays in another nest." They are wrong, in one case, at any rate.

This spring a hedge sparrow built its nest in the rough edge of a pile of faggots. In the course of time four pale blue eggs appeared, and one morning very early a large bird flew down to it. She must have remained there for some time, for as I strolled past when the sun was just rising above the hills she flew off the nest. I knew by the flight that the bird was a cuckoo. Below the pile of faggots, on the ground, lay the scattered remains of the eggs, and the cuckoo, before *laying* her solitary egg in the nest, had apparently sucked all four of them.

I feared that the hedge sparrows would desert the nest, which now surely was but an empty mock, with its one alien egg. In the ordinary way you will find the cuckoo's egg amongst the others, in some cases exchanged for one belonging to the nest. When the young cuckoo is hatched, he displays great irritation if anything

touches his back, and will not rest till the other occupants of the nest, whether eggs or fledgelings like himself, are cast out. The parent birds show an indifference to these unfortunates, and all their efforts are for the intruder.

Thus I was considerably surprised to find that the female sparrow was sitting on the strange egg. Had I, before the tragedy, taken the four eggs away, and placed instead an egg of a robin or a thrush, it is practically certain that it would have been ignored. Both parent birds were near when the female cuckoo was laying her egg, and kept flying round the nest, accompanied by a robin who may have been, like myself, a curious spectator in this domestic affair.

Five weeks afterwards the young cuckoo was many times the size of his wretched foster parents, and throughout the long days of June they worked in the hedges, seeking caterpillars, grubs, and spiders for their querulous nestling.

The migration of the young cuckoo in August is helped by a most interesting series of ingenious frauds. The old cuckoos depart for the south in July, and the younger birds making their way independently, day by day, are directed only by instinct. But the baby cannot feed itself (or probably will not, being a born parasite), and the poor little pair of birds who have slaved for it will not follow him when the wanderlust comes into his blood. The method of cadging a meal is as extraordinary as it is utterly callous.

He will fly ten or twelve miles a day in a southerly direction. At intervals he cries in an infantile, screaming voice. There is bound to be near a pair of birds with young, and should they hear the cry, they leave their

own children and go and feed the wide-mouthed impostor. No small birds, *with fledgelings*, appear to be able to resist the call. They go and feed him. The fact that the young cuckoo bears a resemblance to a kestrel hawk, both in flight and colour, makes their charity all the more mysterious. Down to the south he wanders, his wings getting stronger every day, until the time comes when the sea shines in the distance, and his long journey begins. And throughout the days of his English stay, he lives on the foolish and charitable ones among the smaller insectivorous birds.

Sometimes he is a positive blackguard. Two years ago (1914) I found a cuckoo's egg in a tiny nest of a common wren. When hatched, and only after much difficulty, he hoisted out all his companions, or squashed them, until he broke the nest (round like a ball, and with the hole about an inch or so in diameter in the side) and squatted insolently on top of it. The wrens, with their upright, barred little tails ever jerking with pride, fed him incessantly. The female worked so hard, and the cuckoo was so greedy, that eventually the top of her head was devoid of all feathers, and made quite raw by the beak of her wonder-child. But she was very brave, and was apparently quite indifferent to the risk she ran of one day disappearing altogether. I have often wondered if cuckoos have the power of projecting into other birds the maternal love, or instinct, that is so obviously deficient in themselves. This seems to be the logical conclusion to draw, even if it be incomprehensible to the man who in human life thinks in terms of matter and the individual, instead of the spirit and the species.

THE FALL OF THE LEAF

NOVEMBER 6TH.—The weather is as peaceful to-day, as calm, and as mild, as in early April; and, perhaps, an autumn afternoon and a spring morning do resemble each other more in feeling, and even in appearance, than any two periods of the year. There is in both the same freshness and dewiness of the herbage; the same balmy softness in the air; and the same pure and lovely blue sky, with white fleecy clouds floating across it. The chief difference lies in the absence of flowers, and the presence of leaves. But then the foliage of November is so rich, and glowing, and varied, that it may well supply the place of the gay blossoms of the spring; whilst all the flowers of the field of the garden could never make amends for the want of leaves,—that beautiful and graceful attire in which nature has clothed the rugged forms of trees—the verdant drapery to which the landscape owes its loveliness, and the forests their glory.

If choice must be between two seasons, each so full of charm, it is at least *no bad philosophy to prefer the present good, even whilst looking gratefully back, and hopefully forward, to the past and the future.* And of a surety, no fairer specimen of a November day could well be found than this,—a day made to wander

By yellow commons and birch-shaded hollows,
And hedgerows bordering unfrequented lanes;

nor could a prettier country be found for our walk than this shady and yet sunny Berkshire, where the scenery, without rising into grandeur or breaking into wildness, is so peaceful, so cheerful, so varied, and so thoroughly English.

We must bend our steps towards the water-side, for I have a message to leave at Farmer Riley's: and sooth to say, it is no unpleasant necessity; for the road thither is smooth and dry, retired, as one likes a country walk to be, but not too lonely, which women never like; leading past the Loddon—the bright, brimming, transparent Loddon—a fitting mirror for this bright blue sky, and terminating at one of the prettiest and most comfortable farmhouses in the neighbourhood.

How beautiful the lane is to-day, decorated with a thousand colours! The brown road, and the rich verdure that borders it, strewn with the pale yellow leaves of the elm, just beginning to fall; hedgerows glowing with long wreaths of the bramble in every variety of purplish red; and overhead the unchanged green of the fir, contrasting with the spotted sycamore, the tawny beech, and the dry sere leaves of the oak, which rustle as the light wind passes through them; a few common hardy yellow flowers (for yellow is the common colour of flowers, whether wild or cultivated, as blue is the rare one), flowers of many sorts, but almost of one tint, still blowing in spite of the season, and ruddy berries glowing through all. How very beautiful is the lane!

And how pleasant is this hill where the road widens, with the group of cattle by the wayside, and George Hearn, the little postboy, trundling his hoop at full speed, making all the better haste in his work, because he cheats himself into thinking it play! And how beautiful, again, is this patch of common at the hilltop with the clear pool, where Martha Pither's children,—elves of three, and four, and five years old,—without any distinction of sex in their sunburnt faces and tattered drapery, are dipping up water in their little homely cups shining with cleanliness, and a small brown pitcher with the lip broken, to fill that great kettle, which, when it is filled, their united strength will never be able to lift! They are quite a group for a painter, with their rosy cheeks, and chubby hands, and round merry faces; and the low cottage in the background, peeping out of its vine lines and china roses, with Martha at the door, tidy, and comely, and smiling, preparing the potatoes for the pot, and watching the progress of dipping and filling that useful utensil, completes the picture.

But we must go on. No time for more sketches in these short days. It is getting cold too. We must proceed in our walk. Dash is showing us the way and beating the thick double hedgerow that runs along the side of the meadows, at a rate that indicates game astir, and causes the leaves to fly as fast as an east wind after a hard frost. Ah! a pheasant! a superb cock pheasant! Nothing is more certain than Dash's questing, whether in a hedgerow or covert, for a better spaniel never went into the field; but I fancied that it was a hare afoot, and was almost as much startled to

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hear the whirring of those splendid wings, as the princely bird himself would have been at the report of a gun. Indeed, I believe that the way in which a pheasant goes off, does sometimes make young sportsmen a little nervous (they don't own it very readily, but the observation may be relied on nevertheless), until they get as it were broken in to the sound; and then that grand and sudden burst of wing becomes as pleasant to them as it seems to be to Dash, who is beating the hedgerow with might and main, and giving tongue louder, and sending the leaves about faster than ever—very proud of finding the pheasant, and perhaps a little angry with me for not shooting it; at least looking as if he would be angry if I were a man; for Dash is a dog of great sagacity, and has doubtless not lived four years in the sporting world without making the discovery, that although gentlemen do shoot, ladies do not.

The Loddon at last! the beautiful Loddon! and the bridge, where every one stops, as by instinct, to lean over the rails, and gaze a moment on a landscape of surpassing loveliness,—the fine grounds of the Great House, with their magnificent groups of limes, and firs, and poplars grander than ever poplars were; the green meadows opposite, studded with oaks and elms; the clear winding river; the mill with its picturesque old buildings bounding the scene; all glowing with the rich colouring of autumn, and harmonized by the soft beauty of the clear blue sky, and the delicious calmness of the hour. The very peasant whose daily path it is, cannot cross that bridge without a pause.

But the day is wearing fast, and it grows colder and

colder. I really think it will be a frost. After all, spring is the pleasantest season, beautiful as this scenery is. We must get on. Down that broad yet shadowy lane, between the park, dark with evergreens and dappled with deer, and the meadows where sheep, and cows, and horses are grazing under the tall elms; that lane, where the wild bank, clothed with fern, and tufted with furze, and crowned by rich berried thorn, and thick shining holly on the one side, seems to vie in beauty with the picturesque old paling, the bright laurels, and the plummy cedars, on the other;—down that shady lane, until the sudden turn brings us to an opening where four roads meet, where a noble avenue turns down to the Great House; where the village church rears its modest spire from amidst its venerable yew trees: and where, embosomed in orchards and gardens, and backed by barns and ricks, and all the wealth of the farmyard, stands the spacious and comfortable abode of good Farmer Riley,—the end and object of our walk.

And in happy time the message is said and the answer given, for this beautiful mild day is edging off to a dense frosty evening; the leaves of the elm and the linden in the old avenue are quivering and brating and fluttering in the air, and at length falling idly on the earth, as if Dash were beating for easants in the tree-tops; the sun gleams dimly through the fog, giving little more of light and heat than his fair sister the lady moon;—I don't know a more disappointing person than a cold sun; and I am pinning to wrap my cloak closely round me, and to calculate the distance to my own fireside, recanting all

the way my praises of November, and longing for the showery, flowery April, as much as if I were a half-chilled butterfly, or a dahlia knocked down by the frost.

Ah, dear me! what a climate this is, that one cannot keep in the same mind about it for half an hour together! I wonder, by the way, whether the fault is in the weather, which Dash does not seem to care for, or in me? If I should happen to be wet through in a shower next spring, and should catch myself longing for autumn, that would settle the question.

MISS MITFORD—*Our Village.*

FROZEN VOICES

THERE are no books that I more delight in than in travels, especially those that describe remote countries, and give the writer an opportunity of showing his parts, without incurring any danger of being examined or contradicted. Among all the authors of this kind, our renowned countryman Sir John Mandeville has distinguished himself by the copiousness of his invention, and the greatness of his genius. The second to Sir John I take to have been Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, a person of infinite adventure and unbounded imagination. One reads the voyages of these two great wits with as much astonishment as the travels of Ulysses in Homer, or of the Redcross Knight in Spenser. All is enchanted ground and fairyland.

I have got into my hands, by great chance, several manuscripts of these two eminent authors, which are filled with greater wonders than any of those they have communicated to the public; and indeed, were they not so well attested, would appear altogether improbable. I am apt to think the ingenious authors did not publish them with the rest of their works, lest they should pass for fictions or fables; a caution not unnecessary, when the reputation of their veracity was not yet established in the world. But as this reason has now no further

weight, I shall make the public a present of these curious pieces, at such times as I shall find myself unprovided with other subjects.

The present paper I intend to fill with an extract of Sir John's journal, in which that learned and worthy knight gives an account of the freezing and thawing of several short speeches which he made in the territories of Nova Zembla.

Not to keep my reader any longer in suspense, the relation, put into modern language, is as follows:

"We were separated by a storm in the latitude of seventy-three, insomuch that only the ship which I was in, with a Dutch and French vessel, got safe into a creek of Nova Zembla. We landed in order to refit our vessels, and store ourselves with provisions. The crew of each vessel made themselves a cabin of turf and wood, at some distance from each other, to fence themselves against the inclemencies of the weather, which was severe beyond imagination. We soon observed that in talking to one another we lost several of our words, and could not hear one another at above two yards' distance, and that too when we sat very near the fire.

"After much perplexity, I found that our words froze in the air before they could reach the ears of the persons to whom they were spoken. I was soon confirmed in the conjecture, when, upon the increase of the cold, the whole company grew dumb, or rather deaf; for every man was sensible, as we afterwards found, that he spoke as well as ever; but the sounds no sooner took air, than they were condensed and lost. It was now a miserable spectacle to see us nodding and gaping at one another,

every man talking, and no man heard. One might observe a seaman, that could hail a ship at a league's distance, beckoning with his hand, straining his lungs, and tearing his throat—but all in vain.

"We continued here three weeks in this dismal plight. At length, upon a turn of wind, the air about us began to thaw. Our cabin was immediately filled with a dry clattering sound, which I afterwards found to be the
 our heads, and
 which I imputed
 in the English
 tongue. I soon after felt a breeze of whispers rushing by my ear; for those, being of a soft and gentle substance, immediately liquefied in the warm wind that blew across our cabin. There were soon followed by syllables and short words, and at length by entire sentences, that melted sooner or later, as they were more or less congealed; so that we now heard everything that had been spoken during the whole three weeks that we

and time for the ship's crew to go to bed. This I knew to be the pilot's voice; and, upon recollecting myself, I concluded that he had spoken these words to me some days before, though I could not hear them until the present thaw. My reader will easily imagine how the whole crew was amazed to hear every man talking, and see no man open his mouth.

"When this confusion of voices was pretty well over, though I was afraid to offer at speaking, as fearing I should not be heard, I proposed a visit to the Dutch

cabin, which lay about a mile farther up in the country. My crew were extremely rejoiced to find they had again recovered their hearing; though every man uttered his voice with the same apprehensions that I had done.

"At about half a mile's distance from our cabin, we heard the groanings of a bear, which at first startled us; but upon inquiry, we were informed by some of our company that he was dead, and now lay in salt, having been killed upon that very spot about a fortnight before, in the time of the frost. Not far from the same place we were likewise entertained with some posthumous snarls and barkings of a fox.

"We at length arrived at the little Dutch settlement; and, upon entering the room, found it filled with sighs that smelt of brandy, and several other unsavoury sounds, that were altogether inarticulate. My valet, who was an Irishman, fell into so great a rage at what he heard, that he drew his sword! but not knowing where to lay the blame, he put it up again. We were stunned with these confused noises, but did not hear a single word until about half an hour after; which I ascribed to the harsh and obdurate sounds of that language, which wanted more time than ours to melt, and become audible.

"After having here met with a very heavy welcome, we went to the cabin of the French, who, to make amends for their three weeks' silence, were talking and disputing with greater rapidity and confusion than I ever heard in an assembly even of that nation. Their language, as I found, upon the first giving of the weather, fell asunder and dissolved. I was here convinced of an error into which I had before fallen; for

I fancied that if the freezing of the sound, it was necessary for it to be wrapped up, and, as it were, preserved in breath; but I found my mistake when I heard the sound of a kit playing a minuet over our heads. I asked the occasion of it; upon which one of the company told me, it would play there above a week longer, if the thaw continued: "For," says he, "finding ourselves bereft of speech, we prevailed upon one of the company, who had his musical instrument about him, to play to us from morning to night; all which time . . . to kill time."

. . . id philosophical reasons during the frost; but, as they are something prolix, I pass them over in silence, and shall only observe, that the honourable author seems, by his quotations, to have been well versed in the ancient poets; which perhaps raised his fancy above the ordinary pitch of historians, and very much contributed to the embellishments of his writings.

J. ADDISON—*The Spectator*.

ON A DISTANT VIEW OF A PIG

YES, I would certainly keep a pig. The idea came to me while I was digging. I find that there is no occupation that stimulates thought more than digging if you choose your soil well. Digging in the London clay does not stimulate thought; it deadens thought. It is good exercise for the body, but it is no exercise for the mind. You can't play with your fancies as you plunge your spade into this stiff and stubborn medium. But in the light, porous soil of my garden on the chalk hills digging goes with a swing and a rhythm that sets the thoughts singing like the birds. I feel I could win battles when I'm digging, or write plays or lyrics that would stun the world, or make speeches that would stir a post to action. Ideas seem as plentiful as blackberries in the autumn, and if only I could put down the spade and capture them red-hot I feel I could make *The Star* simply blaze with glory.

It was in one of these prolific moments that I thought of the pig. Like all great ideas there was something inevitable about it. The calculations of Le Verrier and Adams proved the existence of Neptune before the orb was discovered. They knew it was there before they found it. My pig was born without my knowledge. In the furnace of my mind he took shape merely by the friction of facts. He was a sort of pig by divine right.

It happened thus. In the midst of my digging Jim Squire, passing on the lane, had ~~been~~ used on the other side frost. I straightened illy we talked about potatoes. If you want to get the best out of Jim Squire you must touch him on potatoes. There are some people who find Jim an unresponsive and suspicious yokel. That is because they do not know how to draw him out. Mention potatoes, or carrots, or the best way of dealing with slugs, or the right manure for a hot-bed, or any sensible subject like these, and he simply flows with wisdom and urbanity.

He observes that I should have a tidy few potatoes, what with the garden I was digging, *and* the piece I'd turned over in the orchard, *and* that there bit o' waste land on the hillside which he *had* heard as I was getting Mestur Wistock to plough up for me. Yes, there'd be a niceish lot. And he *did* hear I was going to set King Edwards and Arran Chiefs. Rare and fine potatoes they were too. He had some King Edwards last year—turned out wonderful, they did. One root he pulled up weighed 12 lb. Yes, Miss Mary weighed 'em for him in the scale at the farm—just for a hobby like as you might say. It was like this. He'd seen a bit in the paper about a man as had 8 lb. on a root, and he (Jim) said to himself, "This root beats that by a long chalk I know." And Miss Mary come by and she said she'd weigh 'em. And she did. And it was 12 lb. full, she said. If anything, she said, 'twas a shade over. *She* said as they'd have took a prize anywhere—that's what *she* said. . . . Well, you couldn't have too many potatoes these days. Wonderful good food they were for man *and* pig. . . .

As he went on up the lane my spade took up that word like a refrain. At every rhythmic stroke it seemed to cry "pig" with increasing vehemence.

Then I felt like some watcher of the skies,
When a new planet swims into his ken.

A pig? Why not?—and I straightened my back again. I felt that something prodigious was taking shape. My eye wandered across the orchard. There were the hives standing in a row—three of them, to be increased to twelve as fast as the expert, who has set up her carpenter's shop in the barn, can get the parts put together. And beyond the hives three sheds—one for poultry, one for the hot-bed for mushrooms, the third—why, the very thing. . . . Concrete the floor and it would be a very palace for a pig.

I took a turn up the garden to let the idea have range, and at the gate I saw the farmer's wife coming down the lane. We stopped, and she talked about her cows and about an order she had got from the Government to plough up more pasture, and then—as if echoing the very thought that was drumming in my head—about the litter of pigs she was expecting and of her wish to get the cottagers to keep pigs. Why, this was a very conspiracy of circumstance, thought I. It seemed as though man and events alike were engaged in a plot to make me keep a pig.

With an air of idle curiosity I encouraged the farmer's wife to talk on the thrilling theme, and she responded with enthusiasm. The pig, I found, was a grossly maligned animal. It had lain uncomplaining under imputations that were foul slanders on its innocent and

lovable character. Yes, lovable. She had had pigs who were as affectionate as any dog—pigs that followed her about in sheer friendliness. And as for the charge of filthiness, who was to blame? We gave them dirty styes and then called them dirty pigs. But the pig was a clean animal, loved cleanliness, thrived on cleanliness. It was man the dirty who kept the pig foul and then called him unclean. And what a profitable animal. She had had a sow which had produced 108 pigs and 102 of them came to maturity. What an example to Shoreditch, I said. Perhaps they don't give them clean styes in Shoreditch, she said. No, I replied, they give them dirty styes. . . .

I went indoors, suffused with the vision of the transfigured pig, the affectionate, cleanly, intelligent pig, and took up a paper, and the first thing my eye encountered was an article on "The Cottager's Pig." I read it with the frenzy of a new religion and rose filled to the brim with lore about the animal to whose existence (except in the shape of bacon) I had been indifferent so long. And now, fully seized with the idea, it seemed that the world talked of nothing but pig. It was only that my ears were unstopped and my eyes unsealed by an awakened curiosity; but it seemed to me that the pig had suddenly been born into the universe, and that the air was filled with the rumour of his coming. I encountered the subject at every turn. In *The Times* I read a touching lament over the disappearance of the little black pig. Elsewhere I saw a facsimile letter from Lord Rhondda, in which he declared his loyalty to the pig and denied that he had ever spoken evil of him.

It was a patriotic duty to keep a pig. He was an ally

in the war. I saw the whole German General Staff turning pale at his name, as Mazarin was said to turn pale at the name of Cromwell. Arriving in town I met the eminent politician Mr. R—— and he began to tell me how he had started all his cottagers in the North growing pig. By nightfall I could have held my own without shame or discredit in any company of pig dealers, and in my dreams I saw the great globe itself resting on the back, not of an elephant, but of a pig with a beautiful curly tail.

Later: I have ordered the pig.

ALPHA OF THE PLOUGH—*Leaves in the Wind.*

NOTES

JOHN BUCHAN was born at Perth and educated at Glasgow University and Brasenose College, Oxford. After a busy and distinguished career he was appointed Governor-General of Canada in 1935 and created Baron Tweedsmuir. He has written numerous stories, histories, and biographies.

CHARLES READE was born in Oxfordshire and educated at

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (Lord Macaulay) was born in Leicestershire. His father, Zachary Macaulay, had been a West India merchant and played a prominent part in the agitation for the emancipation of the negro slaves. The son was educated at Cambridge and won great distinction as a scholar and an orator. He was cal-

and His Friends, Our Dogs, and Jeems the Doorkeeper that he is best known.

Companions, while his plays include *Dangerous Corner* and *Time*

HERBERT GEORGE WELLS, one of the outstanding figures of modern literature, was born at Bromley, Kent. He attended Midhurst Grammar School, but family circumstances made it necessary for